Political tensions prompt cut in RP credit rating

Story Below Col. 2

GMA still keeping mum on her plans

By Juliet Javellana

RETURNING from what she called a "very productive trip" abroad, President Macapagal-Arroyo immediately gave an upbeat report on her five-day official trip. But about the matter many wanted to know most about—her plans for the 2004 elections—she kept mum.

Instead, the President reiterated her

GMA/ A22

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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- **ADB remains bullish on Asia** BUSINESS/B1
- **Army captain linked to slay of 4 youths** ACROSS/A12

GLAD TO BE BACK. President Macapagal arrives at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport from a five-day visit to the United States and Europe.

PCPO-MALACAÑANG

4% turnout in overseas registration

Officials consider list-up a success

By Gerald G. Lacuarta and Martin P. Marfil

ONLY some 300,000 absentee voters, or 4 percent of the 7.5 million Filipinos overseas, registered in Philippine embassies and consular offices as of the last day of the list-up yesterday, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The number of overseas Filipinos, who registered for the May elections from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30, is way below the 4 million to 5 million that Commission on Elections chair Benjamin Abalos had expected when the Overseas Absentee Voting Act of 2003 was signed into law on Feb. 13.

Despite the low registration rate, DFA's Overseas Absentee Voting Secretariat and the Comelec declared the exercise a "success."

Not for former Sen. Raul Roco, who said he would ask the Comelec to extend the registration. He attributed the low turnout to the failure of Comelec representa-

4% TURNOUT/ A20

Third Force batting for Danding or FPJ, says Lakas lawmaker

By Carlito Pablo

NEITHER Gloria nor Ping.

If Rep. Jacinto Paras (Lakas, Negros Oriental) is to be taken at his word, a new multi-party coalition—a third force—will emerge to carry the candidacy of either businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. or movie king Fernando Poe Jr.

The members of the coalition, Paras said, will come from President Macapagal-Arroyo's ruling Lakas party and from the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino of president-aspirant Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson.

Paras, who is staunchly pro-Cojuangco, said the new coalition would be composed of a breakaway faction from Lakas, Sen. Edgardo Angara's faction in LDP, and Cojuangco's tightly knit Nationalist People's Coalition.

The Lakas rebel group will be spearheaded by Paras and an estimated 40-50 congressmen rooting for Cojuangco.

Angara had previously expressed support for Cojuangco, even though Lacson had already declared his intention to serve as the opposition's standard bearer in next year's elections.

Paras noted that Lacson was losing the support of the LDP because the former national police chief "practices politics of subtraction not addition."

He said that LDP leaders were being turned off by Lacson's supposed propensity to impose his will on others.

The NPC boasts of at least 70 congressmen and a host of local government officials who will go for Cojuangco or his chosen candidate.

Rep. Prospero Nograles (Lakas, Davao City) had earlier expressed support for a Cojuangco bid, but he is not as gung-ho as Paras about a Lakas split.

Nograles described both Cojuangco and Ms Macapagal as "tentative candidates."

But the ranking LDP member in the House, Minority Leader Carlos Padilla, said the confusion over the President's actual election plans was confounding Lakas but boosting

THIRD/ A20

Spiritual, financial support pouring in for peace in South

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and PDI Mindanao Bureau

ASIDE from the blessings of Pope John Paul II, international financial support is pouring in for a permanent peace agreement between the government and the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

"Peace in Mindanao is within our grasp, buoyed not only by the Pope's blessing, but by the confluence of positive circumstances and events," President Macapagal-Arroyo said in her speech upon arrival from a five-day trip to the United States and Europe.

Ms Macapagal announced that a multi-donor trust fund for Mindanao would be organized by the World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development with commitments from the Islamic Development Fund, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and the governments of Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

The peace fund will be available only after a permanent peace agreement is signed by the government with the MILF, which is fighting for an independent Islamic state in Mindanao.

"The OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference) countries are keenly awaiting developments with growth commitments of aid and in-

SPIRITUAL/ A22

ANG TUNAY NA PAG-IBIG AY NAKAPAG HIHINTAY

'Confess and sin no more'

By Jerome Aning

TRUE love waits.

Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines secretary general Hernando Coronel yesterday used this adage in renewing the Church's reminder to the faithful that sex is for procreation and should be done only within marriage.

Coronel warned that succumbing to the temptation of premarital or extramarital sex had consequences.

Those who acquire a sex-

CONFESS/ A8

Dwindling health budget blamed for alarming rise in sex diseases

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE GOVERNMENT'S dwindling budget allocation for health is to blame for the alarming rise in the number of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including the possibility of an AIDS epidemic, the leader of the opposition bloc in the House of Representatives said yesterday.

Minority Leader Carlos Padilla, whose wife is the president of the biggest association of nurses in the Philippines, said at a news briefing that the government was helpless in the fight against STDs because it was channeling the people's money to less important matters, like debt service.

"There is simply no money for these concerns," Padilla said. "The budget of the Department of Health is shrinking every year, and while there is money for foreign trips, there is no money for basic health care."

The current allocation for health is P12.981 billion, down from last year's P14.5 billion. For next year, Padilla said, Malacañang had proposed P12.901 billion.

"The budget for health magnifies the weird and twisted priorities of the Macapagal administration, which has allocated

DWINDLING/ A8

CONSULATE GENERAL
THE PHILIPPINES

FINAL CALL. Filipino workers in Hong Kong queue for the last day of the overseas absentee voting registration.

DANTE PERALTA

Political risk prompts cut in RP credit rating

MOODY'S Investors Service yesterday downgraded its outlook on the Philippines' long-term foreign currency borrowings to negative from stable in a fresh reminder of rising political risk in the country ahead of the presidential election next year.

The cut caused spreads on Philippine sovereign bonds to widen and briefly hurt the peso but the ratings agency maintained its Ba1 rating on foreign debt, leaving it one notch below investment grade and one higher than those assigned by rival agencies.

Moody's said recent political developments, including a failed coup attempt on July 27 and a Court of Appeals ruling suspending the central bank chief, "reflect deep political tensions."

"Although the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has prevailed against these challenges, political risks are rising as the 2004 presidential election approaches," it said in a statement.

A faltering export performance was also reducing the country's current account surplus and raising pressure on its balance of payments, the ratings agency noted.

Ms Macapagal is widely expected to stand in the presidential election next May, despite having said last December that she would not run. Investors say Ms Macapagal's failure to reiterate that intention is raising uncertainty.

The Philippine peso, which tumbled to near an all-time low of 55.75 per dollar after the July mutiny, initially weakened to near the 55.00 level on the Moody's news from an early high

POLITICAL/ A22

Second FRONTPAGE

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/10/01/03

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Lacson claims Palace unleashed 'attack dogs' against him

By Christine O. Avendaño and Tarra Quismundo

OPPOSITION Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday claimed that Malacañang had unleashed "new attack dogs" to preempt or even stop him from uncovering his third expose against First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo.

Lacson made the statement following recent moves against him, including the filing of a second complaint on Monday before the Senate ethics committee by a group called Filipino Lawyers for Good Governance (Filgood).

The senator said these attacks "shifted to high gear" as he prepared to deliver his next round of corruption allegations against Arroyo on the Senate floor when Congress resumes session on Oct. 6.

"I have received information that Malacañang evenr created a task group which has been meeting thrice a week just to make sure that they can put me behind bars before (then)," Lacson said in a statement.

The senator claimed that lawyer Arno Sanidad was part of the task group.

Sanidad has issued statements urging the Supreme Court to expedite resolution of the 1995 Kuratong Baleleng rubout case, in which Lacson and former officials of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force were implicated. The lawyer said Lacson's exposes against Arroyo were meant to divert attention from the case.

Ricardo Abcede, Filgood national convenor and spokesperson, was another Malacañang attack dog, Lacson said.

Also yesterday, the senator sought for the dismissal of the libel charges that Arroyo filed against him on Aug. 27, nine days after the privilege speech that launched the Jose Pidal scandal.

Lacson and co-respondents Lito Banayo and Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla filed individual counter-affidavits before the office of Manila Prosecutor Nestor Gonzalez. Lacson, who was represented by his lawyers, invoked parliamentary immunity.

But he is scheduled to appear before Gonzalez on or before Oct. 21, when Arroyo files his response to the counter-affidavits.

In his libel complaint, Arroyo cited statements made by Lacson in press conferences on Aug. 19 and 20 which, lawyer Jesus Santos said, were not covered by parliamentary immunity.

Bush safety paramount concern, says Palace

By Gil C. Cabacungan, Carlito Pablo and Cynthia D. Balana

THE SAFETY of the world's most powerful man during his short stay in the country is of paramount concern, Malacañang said yesterday amid the agitation among legislators caused by the security preparations for the visit here on Oct. 18 of US President George W. Bush.

The Philippines would be "placed in a very bad light" if any harm should come to Bush during his visit, deputy presidential spokesperson Ricardo Saludo said at a briefing in which he addressed the concerns of some resentful House members who claim that US security people have taken over the security preparations in the Batasan complex from the hands of Filipinos.

"We have a working arrangement between the Philippine and US security agencies to ensure that there will be no security glitches that would mar Bush's visit," Saludo said.

"If there are problems in the preparations, these can be sorted out. We leave it to the police and the Presidential Security Group to come up with a workable solution," he said.

Saludo stressed that the government's cooperation with US security agencies did not mean that it has passed on domestic security matters to foreigners.

It did not mean either that the Macapagal administration held Philippine law enforcement agencies' capability in low esteem.

"What we are saying is we are working with them [US authorities] closely to ensure a peaceful and safe visit," Saludo said.

Administration Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri warned the Americans that their heavy-handed security plans were straining Filipino hospitality so that they risked a boycott by House legislators of Bush's address before a joint session of Congress.

"Allowing our guests to take over our house is not part of Filipino hospitality," Zubiri said.

Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran described the security preparations for Bush as "highly paranoid" and suggested that he speak at the US Embassy instead.

Beltran said that he would boycott Bush's address and join the protest actions outside the Batasan complex.

"It's not an honor to hear him speak. It will strain the limits of my patience to listen to him spout platitudes even as his government maims the Philippines through its direct economic, military and political influence," he said.

The House leadership has not clarified reports that Batasan employees would be asked not to report for work from Oct. 13 to 16 as part of the security preparations for the Bush visit.

House Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez has said the reports were exaggerated and is reported to have chided Rep. Apolinario Lozada, who blew the lid off the supposed takeover of the US Secret Service agents of Batasan security, for talking too much.

Lozada, the chair of the House committee on foreign relations, yesterday demanded that Speaker Jose de Venecia explain the security arrangements in the House for the Bush address.

"They [the Americans] act as if all Filipinos are suspected as terrorists. Will they do the same thing in countries to be visited by the US President?" he said.

According to Lozada, the Americans will take over the Batasang Pambansa complex, place it under their own security forces, order the occupants to leave the place except for some who would be asked to stay under heavy security to listen to the speech of the US President.

"It would be a scripted occasion where President Macapagal-Arroyo, Speaker Jose de Venecia and Senate President Franklin Drilon are the only ones allowed to shake hands with the US President. Just like in a big movie production, all others will be just part of the cast. All of us will be here as props," he said.

Lozada said that US security people will monitor all movements of people, including congressmen, the session hall, the press office and the rest rooms.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said that more than a hundred US security men have started securing the perimeter and the premises of Batasan building inconveniencing legislators and employees.

He said the legislators resented the way the Almon Marina coffee shop and lounge near the main session hall were given over for the US Secret Service's command post.

UP-PGH holds "Advanced Ultrasonography for High Risk Pregnancies"

UP-PGH
Dept. of Obstetrics & Gynecology

Mildred N. Pareja, MD, MHPEd
Department Chair

SECTION OF MATERNAL & FETAL MEDICINE

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David V. Marcaida, MD
Ma. Cristina G. Pelaez-Crisologo, MD
Ma. Susan B. Villaluz, MD

In its bid to further expand the study on Ultrasonography, the Section of Maternal and Fetal Medicine of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the University of the Philippines - Philippine General Hospital will conduct a 2003 Postgraduate Course dubbed as, "Advanced Ultrasonography for High Risk Pregnancies" on October 2 and 3, 2003. This is made possible in cooperation with Blue Sky Trading, Inc. The event will be held at the Class 1972 Theater at the UP College of Medicine, UP-Manila.

A two-week hands-on course will follow, at the hospital's Perinatology Center. Its main objective is to establish the application of ultrasonography in the diagnosis and antenatal surveillance of selected high-risk pregnancies.

The Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology has ventured on several projects by continuously updating its facilities and conducting specialized training. At present, the department has acquired the SONOACE 6000c with Doppler and 3-D capabilities, which aims to provide advanced diagnostic services for complicated pregnancies and monitoring of mother and fetus. The newest acquisition does not only further advance the quality of patient care but also enhances the training capabilities and enlarges research opportunities.

Coupled with seasoned and competent facilitators/speakers, and state-of-the-art equipment for hands-on training, participants of the said postgraduate course are guaranteed of extensive leaning in the field of Ultrasonography. For particulars please call 521-8450 loc. 2309.

Advanced Ultrasonography for High Risk Pregnancies

OBJECTIVE: Application of ultrasonography in the diagnosis and antenatal surveillance of selected high risk pregnancies

PART I: DIDACTICS (October 2 & 3)

Day 1

Fetal Biophysical Profile - Comparable to Intra-uterine Vital Signs	Ernesto S. Uichanco, MD
Antenatal Congenital Anomaly Screening	Ana Marie M. Burgos, MD
Trends in Doppler Velocimetry Use	Valerie T. Guinto, MD
Investigation of Fetal Hydrops	Ana Marie M. Burgos, MD
Intra-uterine Growth Restriction Proper Work-up	Ernesto S. Uichanco, MD
Oligohydramnios: A True Cause for Alarm?	Anna Marie Bella O. Cagayan, MD

Day 2

Introduction to Ultrasound Based Semi-invasive Procedures: Amniocentesis/Amnioreduction/Amnioinfusion; Cordocentesis & Intra-uterine Blood Transfusion	Joyceline Noemi I. Silao, MD, MPH
Fetal Echocardiography	
Proper Approaches in Antenatally Identified Fetal Anomaly	
Uses of Ultrasonography in Multiple Pregnancy	Ma. Lora G. Tansengco, MD
Appropriate Ultrasound Reporting in High Risk Pregnancies	Virginia R. de Jesus, MD, MHPEd

Part II: HANDS-ON (October 6 - 17)

Personal supervision by the consultants of the section in the proper performance of biometry, biophysical profile, congenital anomaly scan and Doppler flow Velocimetry studies of major fetal vessels.

* Prerequisites: (1) Completed Residency Training Program in Obstetrics & Gynecology with Certificate of Training in Ultrasound; - OR -
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TO MARK the arrival of President Macapagal-Arroyo from a 5-day trip abroad, members of the People's Movement Against Poverty stage an angry rally in front of the Arroyo-owned LTA building in Makati City.

ERIK ARAZAS

Pro-Erap supporters stage protest at LTA

By Alcuin Papa

SUPPORTERS of former president Joseph Estrada yesterday staged a rally at the LTA Building in Makati City just as President Macapagal-Arroyo and First Gentleman Mike Arroyo arrived from abroad after a five-day working visit to New York, Rome and Paris.

Some 50 rallyists belonging to the People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP), the Kilusan Para sa Pambansang Demokrasya (KPD) and the Kilusan para sa Makatarungang Lipunan at Gobyerno (KMLG) tried to enter Perea Street in Makati on their way to the LTA Building where the First Gentleman holds office. But they were stopped by riot policemen. The street was also blocked by a six-by-six truck.

The rallyists instead held a noise barrage at the corner of Perea and Dela Rosa Streets.

They demanded an end to "Conjugal Corruption" and for the Arroyo family to "fully disclose all their wealth before the public."

"We are here to welcome back Mr. and Mrs. Jose Pidal," said Millete Morante, secretary general of the KPD, referring to allegations made by Sen. Panfilo Lacson that the First Gentleman laundered money under the name "Jose Pidal."

Morante also questioned how the President "could even offer herself as a candidate for 2004 given her track record of unfulfilled promises in particular ridding government of corruption and alleviating poverty."

Now that the Arroyos have returned, leaders of the KMLG pledged to intensify their campaign against corruption.

Meanwhile, the camp of the First Gentleman denounced yesterday the "squid tactics" employed by Lacson to delay the hearing of the libel cases Arroyo filed against the senator.

In a statement, Arroyo's lawyer Atty. Jesus Santos said Lacson submitted to the Manila City Prosecutor's Office his counter-affidavit but did not swear to its contents before Prosecutor Nestor Gonzales.

"Instead of submitting a signed, sworn counter-affidavit, we all have to wait until Oct. 21. This is a waste of valuable time and a definite indication that Sen. Lacson is jittery about the contents of his counter-affidavit. Why else would it not be sworn to?" Santos asked.

Ombudsman rebuffs Honasan on DOJ probe

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

OPPOSITION Sen. Gregorio Honasan yesterday lost his bid for the Office of the Ombudsman to investigate the coup d'état charges filed against him for his alleged involvement in the failed July 27 Oakwood mutiny.

Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo told the Supreme Court that the Department of Justice has the full authority and jurisdiction to conduct the preliminary investigation on the coup charges against the senator.

In his 27-page comment to Honasan's petition for certiorari seeking the transfer of the investigation to the Ombudsman, Marcelo said the alleged acts of Honasan in leading the July 27 Oakwood mutiny cannot be considered part of his duties as legislator. "No stretch of imagination can qualify such acts done to overthrow the incumbent government and authorities by arms and violence, as acts reminiscent of the discharge of the petitioner's (Honasan's) legislative duties as senator," Marcelo said.

Honasan earlier asked the SC to stop the DOJ from continuing its investigation on the coup charges against him, saying the Ombudsman has proper jurisdiction over his case.

Honasan claimed that the criminal acts he allegedly committed were done "in relation to his office," thus, the Ombudsman should investigate him. But the Ombudsman rebuffed Honasan, saying the alleged acts could not have been carried out by Honasan while he was performing his duties as senator.

Police report capture of Janjalani aide

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Police are claiming that they captured the deputy of Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffy Janjalani on Monday at a checkpoint near Malisbong bridge in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat.

Chief Insp. Kadil Masahod, Palimbang police chief, told reporters that they set up the checkpoint at the boundary of Barangays Malisbong and Pinol in Maitum, Sarangani, after they received intelligence information that Abu Sulaiman and his aide were planning to sneak out on a skylab, a modified motorcycle used by commuters in areas inaccessible to four-wheel vehicles.

Around 6 a.m., the checkpoint police flagged down a skylab. One of the two passengers ran away and jumped into a passenger van. Pursuing policemen caught up with him at the Maitum public terminal.

Back at the Palimbang station, he introduced himself as Hashim Ramirez, although the police noticed that he resembled Abu Sulaiman, an officer of the kidnap-for-ransom group. The military and police in Central Mindanao earlier distributed photos of Janjalani and 54 members of the group, who reportedly entered Palimbang in early July.

The two suspects were turned over to the 601st Army Brigade.

During the tactical interrogation, Ramirez admitted he was a member of the Abu Sayyaf, but denied he was Abu Sulaiman, or any other ranking officer.

The other suspect was identified as Monis Amajad Jalalon, 34, resident of Barangay Moti, Curuan District, in Zamboanga City.

Brig. Gen. Alexander Yano, 601st Brigade commander, told the Inquirer that he had yet to see the captives.

"(If one of them) is Abu Sulaiman, this would be a big blow to the Abu Sayyaf group," Yano said. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ABU SAYYAF THREAT

Security tightened for foreigners in South

By TJ Burgonio

THE MILITARY has ordered field commanders to intensify security for foreigners in Mindanao following a fresh warning that the Abu Sayyaf was planning to snatch the American consultant of a construction firm in Zamboanga City.

A military intelligence report alleged that bandits under Isnilon Hapilon and Abdullah Mohammad Ajijul were set to abduct the American, whose identity was withheld for security reasons. Policarpio Construction, the company he works for, is conducting road-widening projects in Zamboanga City.

According to the same report, the kidnap-for-ransom group has contracted an employee of the firm to monitor the target's movements.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, military information officer, said general headquarters has instructed "subordinate units" in the Southern Command to validate the report and secure foreigners in Mindanao.

"We are not taking this lightly," Lucero told reporters. "Hopefully, we will receive more information about this plan and prevent it from being executed."

The report came as no surprise, Lucero said. "The Southcom issued a warning that the Abu Sayyaf might resume its kidnapping activities to finance its operations."

A few months ago, the group freed its last batch of hostages, preachers of the Jehovah's Witness.

Lucero said the military had noticed a shift of Abu Sayyaf operations from Basilan and Sulu to mainland Mindanao. This became more apparent on Monday, when suspected bandits George Ramirez, 20, and Munid Jalalum Atamad, 40, were captured in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat, and Poblacion Maitum, Sarangani.

On the same day, military officials confirmed a plot by the group to bomb Manila-bound vessels of the WG&A shipping line, and heightened alert levels in Mindanao ports.

Palace says ₱150M spent so far for repair of presidential airplane

MALACAÑANG has spent about P150 million for the overhaul of the presidential airplane, an aging twin-engine Fokker F-28 jet, for P10 million less than the original estimate, a Palace official said yesterday.

The refurbished aircraft will be arriving this month from Singapore where the repairs were undertaken by the Fokker Services Asia (FSA), according to Waldo Flores, the senior deputy executive secretary.

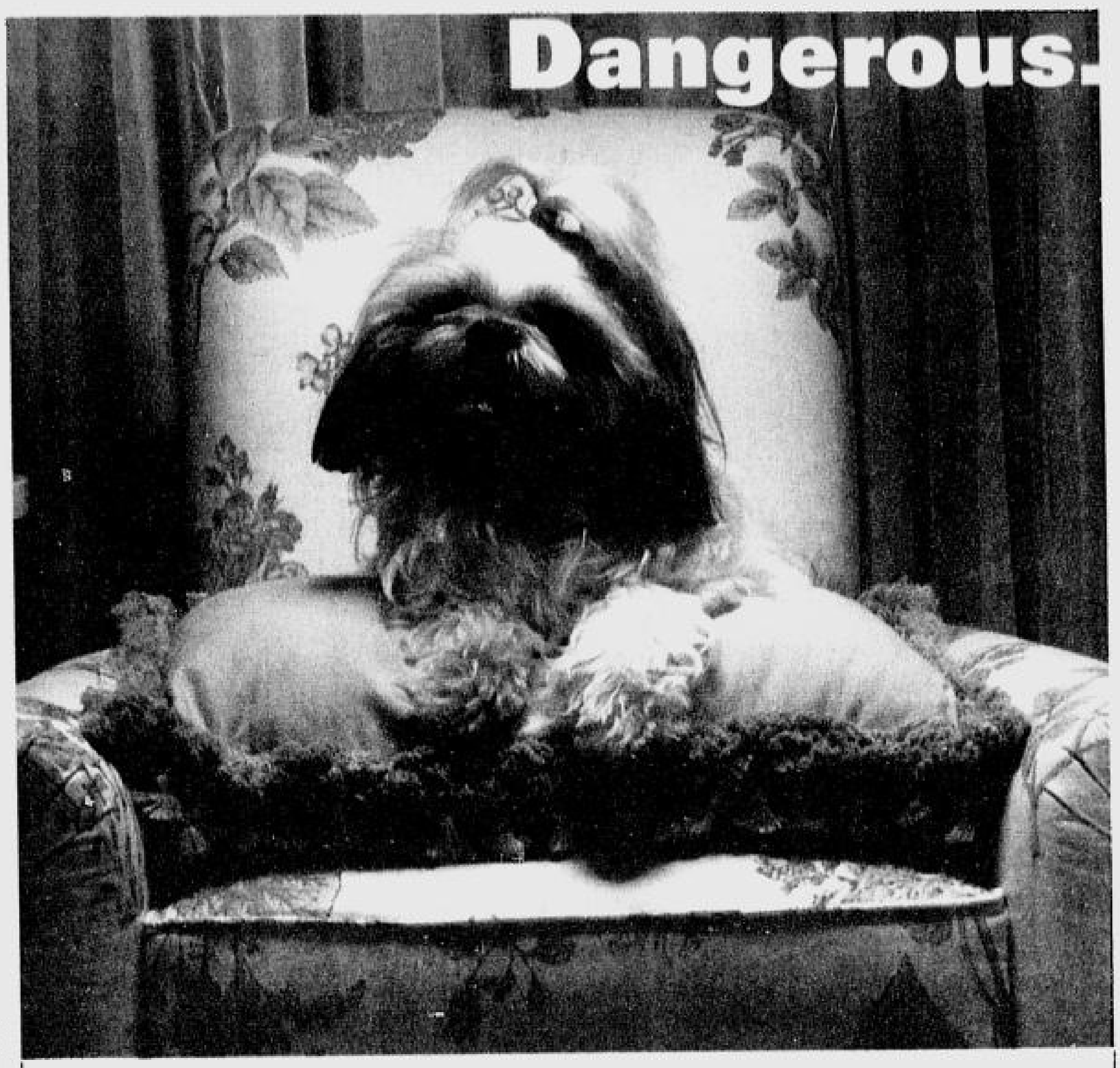
Flores said the Palace opted to have the plane overhauled rather than spend the millions of pesos required to rent a Lear jet for the President's travels around the country.

It was reported that the government had spent about P75 million in charter fares last year while the presidential plane was languishing in a Singapore hangar as a dispute raged between Malacañang and the FSA over the P150-million repair bill.

Malacañang protested that the FSA repair estimate was too high and sued the firm at the Parañaque Regional Trial Court. The FSA relented after the court ordered that an independent appraiser be hired to assess the cost of the repairs.

Flores said the government has also sent several pilots for additional training in Indonesia in handling the newly refurbished presidential plane.

The over two-decades-old aircraft, acquired in 1982 by the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, has few extravagances to set it apart from most executive aircraft other than a presidential chair topped by a presidential seal. *Gil C. Cabacungan*



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R E V I V E

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OPENING HOURS
MONDAY-FRIDAY: 8:00AM-7:00PM SATURDAY: 8:00AM-5:00PM

CARETAKER
Vice President Guingona fields questions from reporters while waiting for the arrival of President Macapagal-Arroyo at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Tuesday. The President thanked Guingona "for taking care of the government" while she was gone. RUDY ESPERAS

$40-M MARCOS ASSETS

Hawaii judge sets January trial for winning plaintiffs

HONOLULU—Thousands of Filipinos who successfully sued the estate of late Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos will have their day in court as they attempt to recover the now-$3.1 billion judgment awarded to them eight years ago.

A federal judge on Monday set a January trial date for attorneys trying to have $40 million in Marcos assets released to begin paying the verdict.

"We're ready to go to trial," said plaintiffs' attorney Sherry Broder.

The $40 million being sought by Honolulu attorneys is among assets that they argue were obtained illegally by the Marcos regime and stashed in various accounts around the world.

The assets originally were held by a Panamanian corporation but have since been transferred to an escrow account because of competing claims of ownership by the Marcos estate, the Philippine government and the human rights victims.

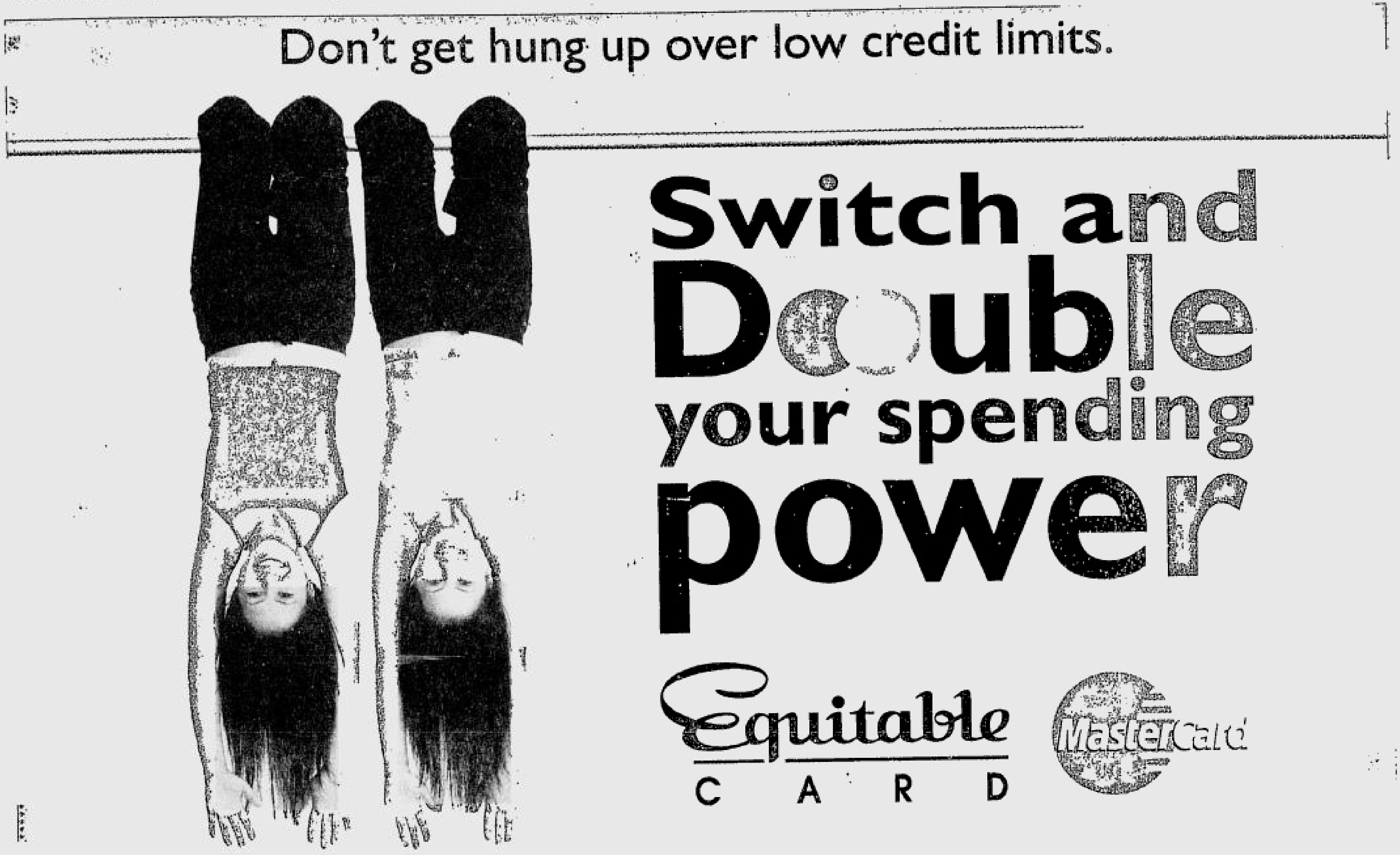
They are separate from some $683 million in frozen Swiss assets that the Philippine Supreme Court awarded to the Philippine government in July. President Macapagal-Arroyo has said some of those funds also will go to the human rights abuse victims.

A class of 9,539 Filipinos sued the Marcos estate in 1986, the year he was deposed and fled to Hawaii. He died in exile in 1989.

In 1995, a Honolulu jury awarded plaintiffs $2 billion after finding Marcos responsible for summary executions, disappearances and torture. The judgment, stalled in court, has grown to about $3.1 billion with interest.

To date, none of the plaintiffs has received any money.

Attorneys were in court Monday arguing several motions related to evidence and statements to be admitted at trial. AP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LAST NAME
FIRST NAME M.I.
BIRTHDATE MM DD Y Y Y Y
MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME First Middle Last
SEX ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE
CIVIL STATUS ☐ SINGLE ☐ SEPARATED ☐ MARRIED ☐ WIDOWED
NO. OF DEPENDENTS
CITIZENSHIP
HOME OWNERSHIP ☐ OWNED ☐ MORTGAGED ☐ RENTED ☐ WITH PARENTS/RELATIVES
EDUCATION ☐ HIGHSCHOOL ☐ SOME COLLEGE ☐ COLLEGE ☐ GRADUATE SCHOOL
TIN
Are you VAT registered? ☐ YES ☐ NO Do you need a VAT receipt? ☐ YES ☐ NO
HOME ADDRESS (number, street, district)
CITY/PROVINCE ZIP CODE YEARS OF STAY
HOME LANDLINE NO. MOBILE PHONE NO.
EMAIL ADDRESS
NAME OF RELATIVE NOT LIVING WITH YOU RELATIONSHIP
HOME ADDRESS (number, street, district)
CITY/PROVINCE ZIP CODE HOME LANDLINE NO.
Are you an existing Equitable cardholder? ☐ YES ☐ NO
Other Equitable Card/s:
CARD NUMBER CREDIT LIMIT ISSUE DATE
1.
2.
3.

YOUR SPOUSE

LAST NAME FIRST NAME M.I.
BIRTHDATE MM DD Y Y Y Y
EMPLOYED
SELF-EMPLOYED
OFFICE PHONE NO.

YOUR WORK AND FINANCES

EMPLOYED
SELF-EMPLOYED
POSITION
YEARS WITH FIRM
NAME OF OFFICE/BUSINESS
OFFICE ADDRESS (department, floor, building)
(number, street, district)
CITY/PROVINCE ZIP CODE OFFICE PHONE NO.

GROSS MONTHLY INCOME (in Pesos) SOURCE OF INCOME
APPLICANT'S
SPOUSE'S
OTHERS
TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME
DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS
BANK BRANCH DEPOSIT BALANCE

▼IF ANY

OTHER CREDIT CARDS
CARD NAME CARD NUMBER CREDIT LIMIT
CREDIT EXPERIENCE
HOME MORTGAGE RENTAL CREDITOR MONTHLY PAYMENT
AUTO

EXTENSION CARD (must be at least 13 years old)

LAST NAME FIRST NAME M.I.
BIRTHDATE MM DD Y Y Y Y
RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT
MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME

DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS

DELIVER MY CARD TO: HOME OFFICE BRANCH/DEPT
☐ PICK UP AT EPCIB
☐ PICK UP AT EQUITABLE CARDNETWORK, INC.
DELIVER MY STATEMENT TO: HOME OFFICE

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I/WE HEREBY AGREE TO WAIVE MY/OUR RIGHT/S REGARDING THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF DEPOSITS UNDER R.A. 1405, AS AMENDED, AS THE DISCLOSURE IS NECESSARY AND RELEVANT IN THE EVALUATION OF MY/OUR APPLICATION FOR AN EQUITABLE CARD AND TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL DEBIT UNDER AN AUTO-DEBIT PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT WITH MY/OUR EQUITABLE PCI BANK ACCOUNT SHOULD I/WE DECIDE TO AVAIL OF THE AUTO DEBIT PAYMENT FACILITY FOR MY/OUR EQUITABLE CARD. I/WE FURTHER AUTHORIZE AND CONSENT TO EQUITABLE CARDNETWORK, INC. TO BE THE RECIPIENT OF THESE INFORMATION.

I/WE HOLD OURSELVES, JOINTLY AND SEVERALLY LIABLE FOR ALL OBLIGATIONS AND LIABILITIES INCURRED WITH THE USE OF THE EQUITABLE CARD AND EXTENSION CARDS AND, IN THE EVENT MY/OUR APPLICATION FOR AN EQUITABLE CARD IS DISAPPROVED, EQUITABLE CARDNETWORK, INC. IS UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE ME/US WITH THE REASON FOR SUCH A DECISION.

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SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

SIGNATURE OF EXTENSION CARD APPLICANT

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DEPARTMENT OF
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DPWH fails to serve suspension orders on erring execs

By Martin P. Marfil

THE DEPARTMENT of Public Works and Highways yesterday finally issued the suspension orders on DPWH Undersecretary Salvador Pleyto and Director Romeo Panganiban but failed to serve them on the two officials who have made themselves "incommunicado."

The two, who earlier flunked the government's lifestyle check, are facing graft charges for their alleged unexplained wealth.

DPWH spokesperson Assistant Secretary Rafael Yabut said the suspension memo for Pleyto was served yesterday afternoon but Pleyto's secretary refused to accept it.

"We were forced to send the memorandum through registered mail," Yabut said in a phone interview.

The DPWH also sent by registered mail the suspension order on Panganiban to his residence in Laguna. Panganiban has not been reporting for work for sometime.

"This happened yesterday afternoon and we also sent a report to the Ombudsman regarding this..." Yabut said, adding that there was no basis for the contempt charge against Public Works Secretary Florante Soriquez.

The Office of the Ombudsman earlier threatened to cite Soriquez for contempt for his failure to implement the suspension orders issued by anti-graft body against Pleyto and Panganiban.

According to Yabut, the DPWH chief could no longer be charged for contempt since they have already issued the suspension orders on the erring DPWH officials.

The Ombudsman ordered the six-month suspension without pay of Panganiban last Sept. 22 and Pleyto last Sept. 25.

The suspension orders instructed Soriquez to immediately implement it upon receiving copies of the order.

"If the order is not implemented, he can be held accountable and face sanctions for his failure to obey the directive of the Ombudsman," Ombudsman spokesperson Ernesto Nocos said.

Meanwhile, sources at the Ombudsman said three more DPWH officials and two ranking officials of the Department of Education will be charged with graft this week after they failed the lifestyle check.

Yesterday, DPWH Undersecretary Salvador Pleyto asked the anti-graft body to reconsider its suspension order.

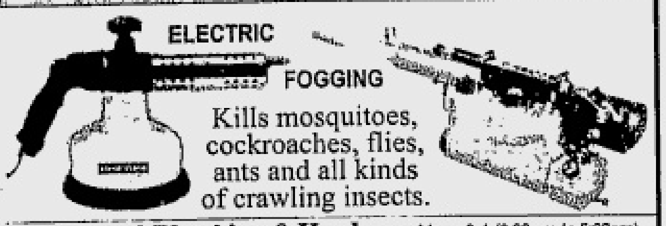
In a press statement, Pleyto said the Ombudsman cannot by its own discretion suspend a public official without following the very criteria set by RA 6770.

"Otherwise, he should have found that the respondent and his family have other legitimate sources of income, that the properties of the respondent were acquired, not only through purchase, but also by loan, inheritance and foreclosure," he said.

Malacañang's Transparency Group and the Lifestyle Check Coalition has charged Pleyto with graft for reportedly amassing P16.6 million worth in undeclared real estate properties.

On the other hand, Panganiban was found to have P81.7 million in undeclared real and personal properties over his declared worth of P12.9 million in 2001.

Panganiban's alleged undeclared assets include a P30 million "modern cockpit" in Sta. Cruz, Laguna; a P24.8 million house and lot in posh Ayala Alabang Village and a $300 (P15 million) house and lot in Pasadena, California. Panganiban allegedly paid P4.8 million in ransom to his kidnappers. *With a report from Armand Nocum*



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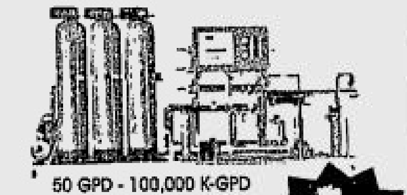

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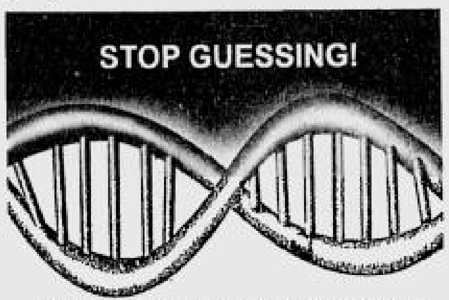

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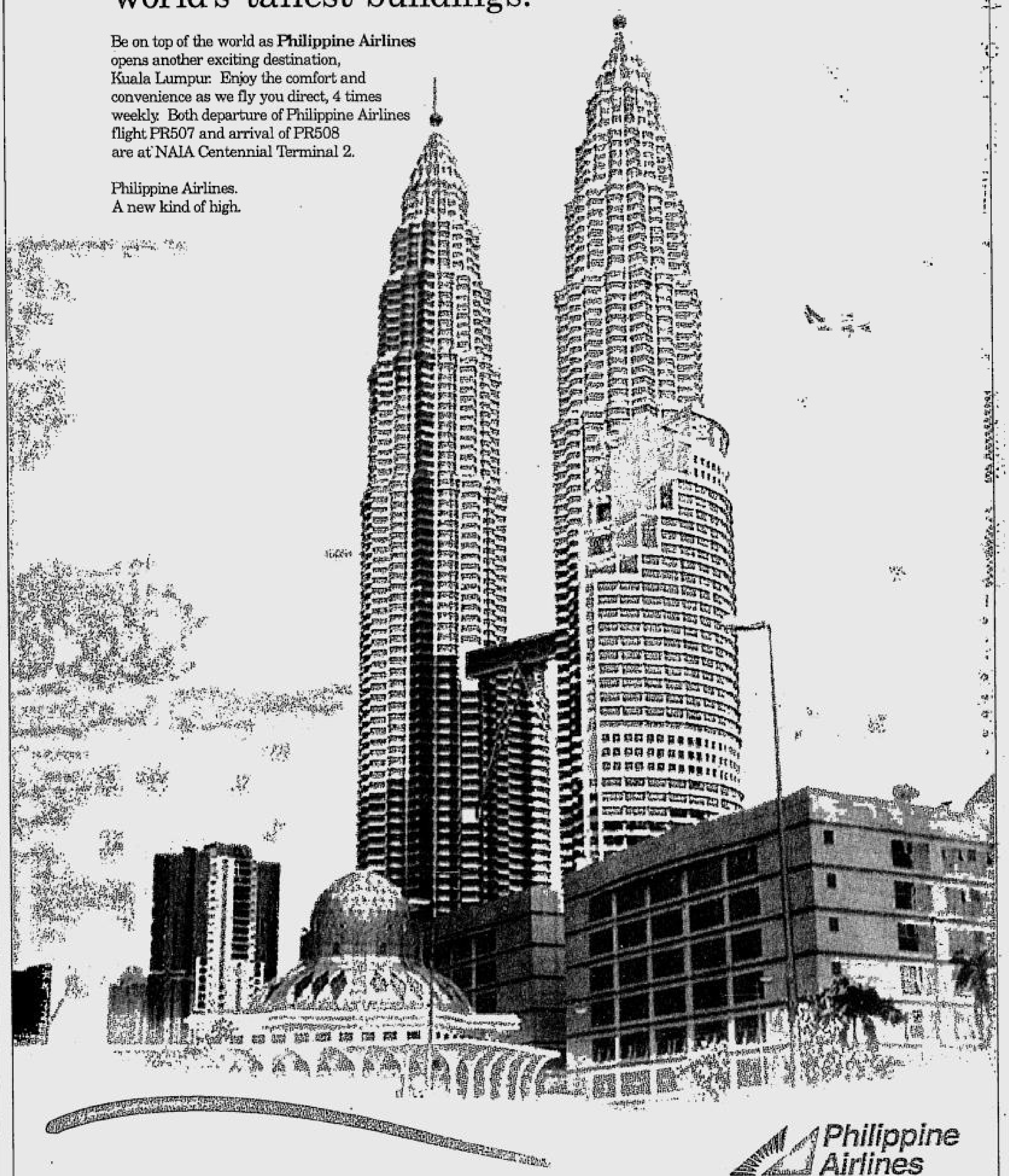

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You don't get sex diseases from toilet seats or pools

By Pennie Azarcon-dela Cruz

YOU can't get sexually transmitted infections (STIs) from toilet seats or swimming pools, and you don't have to be a commercial sex worker or promiscuous to be infected.

Myths and misconceptions have contributed to the rise in STIs in recent years, according to Dr. Junice Melgar, executive director of Likhaan, a women's health organization.

Aside from ignorance, cultural factors and conservative attitudes about women's sexuality aggravate the stigma attached to STIs, further preventing women from seeking medical treatment and confronting their partners about the matter, said Dr. Sylvia Estrada-Claudio, a psychologist, professional counselor and one of the founders of the Women's Crisis Center for battered and abused women.

Melgar debunked the common idea about getting STIs from dirty toilets and pools.

"The microbes and viruses that cause STIs die upon exposure to air, sunlight and water," she said, adding that this was also why women were more "biologically vulnerable" to STIs.

"The sex organs of women are deep inside so the microbes are not immediately exposed. The vagina thus makes for a good incubating medium because it is damp and dark," she said.

Most STI sufferers resort to home remedies rather than seek medical treatment, said Melgar, citing Likhaan's experience in its clinics in urban poor communities in Pasay, Malabon and Bulacan.

"Men especially would use [toothpaste] as a form of contraception and as anti-infection ointment," she said.

The women ignore "unusual growths in their genital areas or profuse discharges because they think these occur naturally as part of being female," she said. "They do not believe that their sexual partners have anything to do with it."

In fact, "they do not want to involve the men at all in the problem," she said.

Puritanism

Society's "puritanical attitude" about sexuality is behind this ignorance, Melgar said.

"Women are taught that touching one's self is bad, that their parts down there are dirty and off-limits. So they seldom have an accurate idea about how their reproductive system works and what's normal and what's not, especially when it comes to secretions and discharges."

Melgar said "women are so uncomfortable about their bodies being touched at all that they hesitate to go to doctors for the tests and smears necessary to diagnose STIs."

"The men [who visit Likhaan clinics] said they even know more about their partners' bodies than the women themselves," she said.

The concept of "the vagina being dirty and smelly" can lead to women being more susceptible to STIs, Melgar said. "Women use washes, sprays and deodorants in an effort to mask the natural smell of the vagina," she said. "These chemical preparations can alter the acidity and natural balance of helpful organisms inside the vagina, and that's when it becomes more vulnerable to infections."

Myths on romantic love also foster a complacent attitude toward STIs, Melgar said.

"The women think that love transcends lust," she said. "They believe that their partners love them enough to resist the temptation of casual sex or having multiple sex partners. This is also why they do not demand protection—such as the use of condoms—during sex. They insist that their men are faithful to them."

Not just biological

According to Claudio, "health is not just a biological issue but [also] a social, cultural and economic one."

She cited the common description of STIs as "sakit ng babae" (women's disease), "which gives the impression that such diseases are spread by women, usually commercial sex workers."

This explains the "disdainful attitude" of government health workers toward women seeking treatment "even if these are monogamous women who got their disease from their male partners," said Claudio.

It doesn't help that most STI clinics are "stand-alone places in disreputable areas," so that patients are immediately identified as STI sufferers even by passersby, she said.

"The stigma attached to STI is such that it brings suspicion on a woman's morality if she has it," Claudio said. "Men's morality is not brought to question because womanizing is generally accepted as part of being a man."

Yet, tracing the disease to a male partner is "also tantamount to admitting that he has been unfaithful to you," the doctor said.

"And repeated infidelity is the worst kind of psychological abuse," she said. "Worse, having an unfaithful spouse is often seen as an indication of a failed marriage that can somehow be traced to a woman being less of a good wife. Again, it is considered the woman's fault."

Bringing up the issue of STI with the infected male partner often results in domestic violence, Claudio said, citing her 15-year experience in counseling battered women.

"The women then learn to compromise, to accept trade-offs. They say, 'I'll just have myself treated for the disease later; it's better than enduring more beatings,'" she said.

But because their partners remain infected, the women's STI keeps recurring as well. "Unfortunately, we can only treat the infections as they occur; there is still no preventive vaccine or medication for it," she said.

Money matters

Economic issues also hound infected women, said Melgar.

"Antibiotics are very costly," she said. "What happens is that once they start feeling better, most people stop taking the antibiotics to save money. They do not go through the whole seven days' regimen, unaware that failing to do so only builds up the virus' resistance to antibiotics. This resistant virus then becomes a medical problem to society as a whole."

Melgar cited other complications arising from untreated STIs: "It can affect the fetus, cause infertility, pelvic inflammatory disease, painful sex with bleeding, and, in the case of syphilis, disabilities and even death should the infection go to the heart and affect the heart valves. They may also cause cancer in the case of genital warts."

Call Likhaan at 926-6230 or 411-3151 for information kits on STIs and the schedule of its mobile clinics that offer on-site health care to communities.

Dwindling health budget blamed for alarming rise in sex diseases

From page A1

more than 30 percent of the 2004 budget for debt service," Padilla said.

He said not only health but also education, infrastructure and social services had been suffering from the supposedly flawed priorities of the administration.

The lawmaker said the Philippines' budget for health had been consistently below the investment benchmark for health set by the World Health Organization.

According to Padilla, the WHO prescribes that countries spend at least 5 percent of their gross-national product for health, but the Philippines spends a mere 0.4 percent.

The Philippines' per capita spending on health services is $37, way below $112 in Thailand and $81 in Malaysia, he said.

Padilla also said that while the Philippine Health Insurance needed a yearly budget of P1 billion to cover more needy people with health insurance, its current budget was only P500 million.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit has expressed deep concern over the rise in STDs. He said Filipinos risked contracting STDs in one out of three contacts with sex workers.

The increase in risky sex behavior is evidenced by the rise in sexual promiscuity among Filipinos, with more young adults engaging in premarital sex and having multiple sex partners, Dayrit said.

Test them for STDs

Still in the House, Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo demanded that personnel comprising the advance security party of US President George W. Bush be obliged to undergo medical examinations, particularly the AIDS test, so as not to exacerbate the problem with STDs.

The party-list representative pointed out that more than a dozen US Secret Service agents had arrived since last week to make security preparations for the Bush visit scheduled on Oct. 18.

He said the DOH must be allowed to clear and sanitize these US personnel who were "mov[ing] around with brazen arrogance" and who could be carrying sex-related diseases.

"Filipinos, especially those working in the House of Representatives, should refrain from having close or intimate physical contact with the Americans until the DOH has cleared them of being carriers of STDs," Ocampo said.

Stick to one

In Cotabato City, the much publicized breakup of TV host Kris Aquino and Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez has led to an on-the-air lecture on STDs by the Mindanao extension of the Office of the President.

Dr. Eduardo Rabago Jr., a medical specialist and President Macapagal-Arroyo's adviser on medical health for South Central Mindanao, said the best cure for STD was prevention. This means "stick to one partner," he said.

Asked on radio about possible alternatives to costly antibiotics and other drugs, Rabago said: "There is actually no safe sex in a life of promiscuity."

Rabago, who specialized in the United States in germ biology, said preventive measures like using a condom was no guarantee against STDs.

"You could be wearing a punctured condom, or if not, the virus can crawl into the open end [of the condom] and you can still be infected," he said. "So the best remedy is stop using it and stick to only one, your only partner."

Rabago said both partners should seek treatment even if only one had contracted an STD. "It's just like ping-pong. Once one is hit, the partner could get infected," he said.

But he quickly added that most cases of STDs like gonorrhea and herpes were usually diagnosed in males.

Aquino has publicly alleged that Marquez, whom she described as an "incurable" womanizer, gave her an STD. Marquez has denied this.

Asked what treatment he would recommend to Aquino, Rabago noted that she "sought medical remedy from the St. Luke's Hospital, which probably has better ways to examine her and give her the best treatment she deserved." *With a report from Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

'Confess and sin no more'

From page A1

ually transmitted infection (STI) as a result of the act must be responsible enough to seek therapy, after which they must "confess and sin no more," he said.

But for those who persist in seeking sexual pleasure outside marriage and in doing so using contraceptives such as condoms and pills, which the Church also disapproves of, Coronel said: "It's a personal choice to choose evil."

The prelate said extramarital relationships also had a psychological effect on the relationship of a married couple.

"The proper context of sexuality is for married men and women to be good to their spouses and for those who are courting [to] wait until marriage," Coronel told reporters in an interview held during his birthday celebration at the CBCP office in Manila.

"A man may say he won't have offspring with his mistress because he uses a condom, but his relationship with his legal wife will definitely suffer," Coronel said. "There are consequences not only in the moral aspect but also in the relationship between husband and wife."

Good choices

Coronel, however, said the Church could only inform and persuade the faithful to follow its teachings on sex.

"We don't just preach this at the pulpit," he said. "We educate Catholics so that they make good choices in life. Any choice you make will also affect people—not just those whom you are sexually involved with but also those who care for both of you."

He said that "true love waits" and that one must always look for true love and happiness.

"Even if we tolerate extramarital affairs, it hurts. People are hurt. So we advocate true love, fidelity and commitment," he said.

Coronel said doing this was difficult. But "the stability of our society and the goodness of our families" depend on it, he said.

This is why the CBCP advocates good people to be the Philippines' leaders, "because the future of our society and country depends on good people," he said.

In Central Visayas, the number of persons found positive of the AIDS-causing human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) this year has risen to 70—an increase of more than 200 percent from last year's number.

200 percent

This was disclosed in a radio interview by Dr. Cora-Lou B. Kintanar, head of the Maternal and Child Health Section of the Department of Health in the region (DOH-7).

Kintanar said the number of all types of STIs was also increasing regionwide, although she did not provide figures.

But what she found more distressing, she said, was that the current risk group was no longer the commercial sex workers but those in their late teens and early 20s.

She expressed the belief that the moral values of the young had changed.

She also said younger people, especially the men, were getting infected because they had a number of sex partners.

Commercial sex workers are not anymore the most vulnerable to STIs because they have learned to protect themselves by using condoms, she said.

Kintanar said that as of September, there were already 10 new cases of HIV compared to the two new cases recorded at the same time last year.

Six of these 10 new cases were recorded by the DOH-7 in July-August, and the first four, from January until June. But the six are still up for confirmation at the DOH-Manila.

Males

About 37 percent of the HIV-positive cases involve overseas workers. Of these, 70 percent are male.

A 21-year-old man is among the new cases. His case was discovered in August when he donated blood to a relative, but his physician is keeping his file confidential, Kintanar said.

Per DOH-7 records, 59 of the 70 HIV-positive cases are from Cebu.

The number of all STI cases in the region is not yet available because the private health sector has yet to submit its report, Kintanar said.

But she said that as of last year, there were at least 12,000 STI cases regionwide. These include herpes, chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis and HIV. *With a report from Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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The congressmen have proposed several amendments to the Party-List System Act (Republic Act 7941) which include increasing the maximum number of seats of party-list groups from three to six and lowering the minimum percentage of votes required to entitle them to a seat in Congress.

The proposed amendments are contained in a bill now being drafted by the House Committee on Suffrage and Electoral Reforms chaired by Rep. Jesli Lapus (Tarlac-3rd district).

At present, a party-list group is entitled to a maximum of three seats in Congress. Party-list groups must get at least two percent of the total valid votes cast for the party-list system to be entitled to a seat in Congress. *Cynthia D. Balana*

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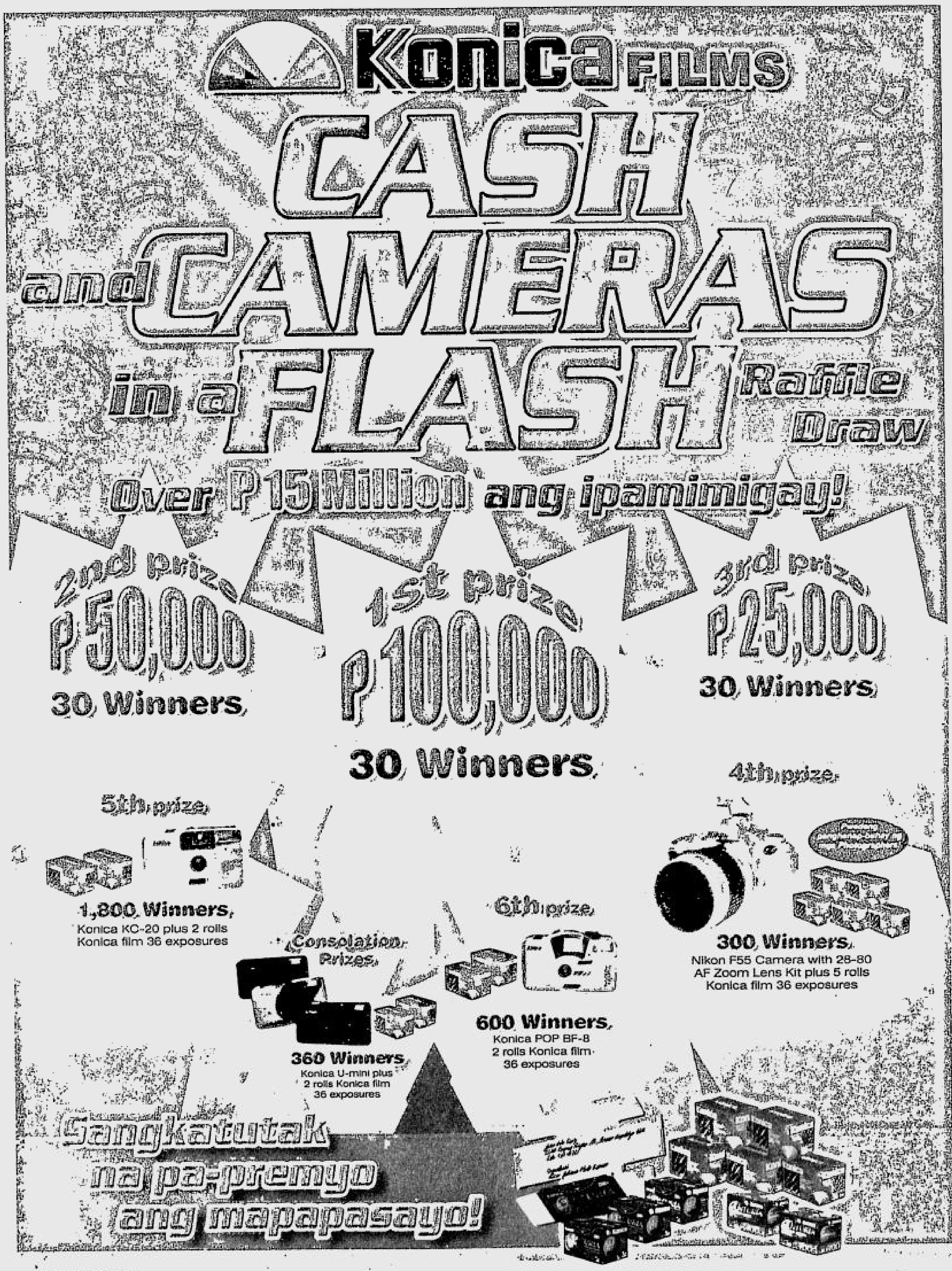
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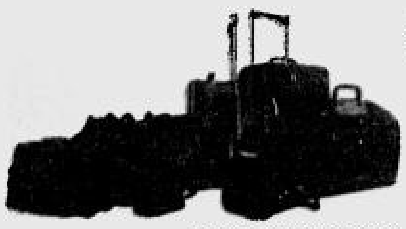

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

N. Korea boosting nuke program

SEOUL—North Korea said Tuesday it was taking "practical measures" to boost its nuclear capabilities, as the United States and South Korea celebrated the 50th anniversary of their military alliance by pledging to keep up their combined deterrence against the communist North.

A spokesperson of North Korea's foreign ministry also told its official news agency KCNA that if the United States tried to force North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons program before it provided Pyongyang with a nonaggression treaty, it would lead to a "war."

The North Korean spokesperson did not elaborate on the "practical measures," but the claim came as some US intelligence analysts were becoming increasingly concerned that the communist regime may have three, four or even six nuclear weapons instead of the one or two the CIA now estimates.

For weeks, North Korea has threatened to strengthen its nuclear weapons program as "deterrent" against what it calls a US plan to invade. It tends to escalate its harsh rhetoric when it wants to extract concessions before crucial talks.

In Seoul, 200 US and South Korean diplomats, generals and other guests gathered in a US military base on Tuesday to mark the 50th anniversary of the signing of their Mutual Defense Treaty. Today, Washington keeps 37,000 troops in South Korea to help guard the inter-Korean border, the world's most heavily armed, with nearly 2 million troops on both sides.

"Unfortunately, one thing that has survived the last 50 years is the threat from North Korea," US Ambassador Thomas Hubbard said in a speech. "Even as we pursue multilateral diplomacy to resolve peacefully the North Korean nuclear problem, however, our two countries must continue to maintain our strong combined deterrence against the North Korean threat."

Pyongyang kept up its harsh rhetoric Tuesday, reiterating that it was no longer interested in holding further negotiations with the United States.

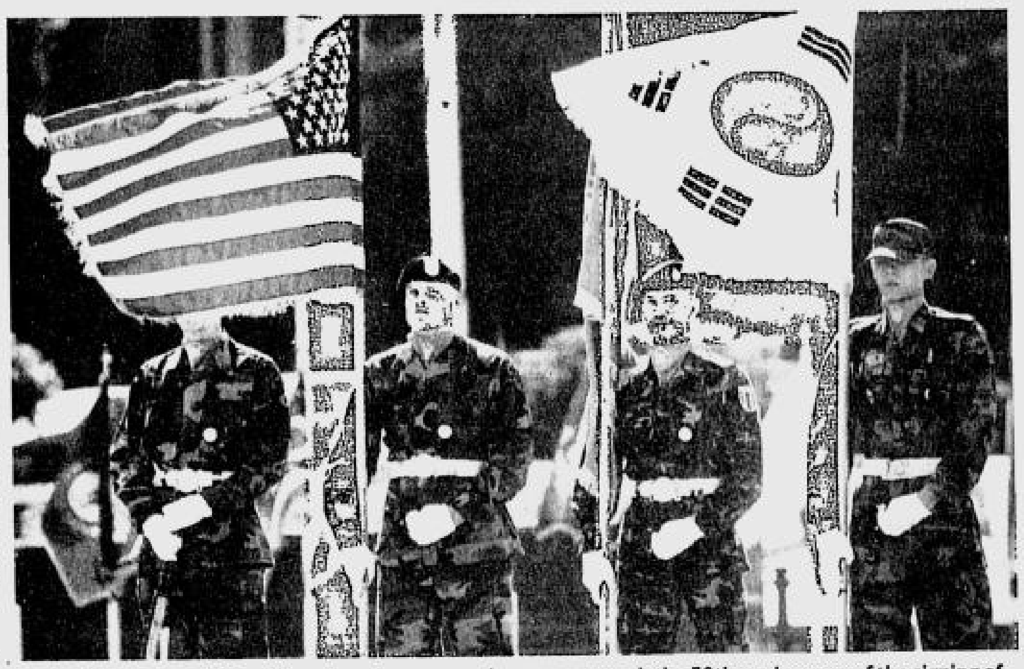
"The DPRK is taking practical measures to steadily beef up the nuclear deterrent force as a just self-defensive means to repel the US nuclear preemptive attack and ensure peace and security on the Korean Peninsula," the North Korean spokesperson said.

DPRK stands for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North's official name.

"It was confirmed that the US does not wish to co-exist with the DPRK in peace but tries to use the six-way talks as a leverage to completely disarm the latter," he said. "This compels the DPRK to discard any interests or expectation for the talks."

In Tokyo, US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, South Korean Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-hyuck and their Japanese counterpart, Mitoji Yabunaka, met Tuesday to discuss how to coax the North to return to six-nation nuclear talks that ended late last month in Beijing without agreeing on a date for further talks.

The six-nation meeting comprised representatives from the United States, the two Koreas, China, Japan and Russia. *AP*



SOUTH Korean and US soldiers in an honor guard ceremony mark the 50th anniversary of the signing of the mutual defense treaty between the two allies at the Yongsan US military base in Seoul on Sept. 30. AFP

Asia defense spending on the rise

LANGKAWI, Malaysia—Asia is expected to spend $70 billion on defense imports between 2002 and 2006 because of the increasing threats of war and terrorism, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said Tuesday.

Mahathir was speaking at the official opening of the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition on this northern island, which has drawn some 600 companies from 25 countries.

"A wave of uncertainty has swept across the world, brought about by the increasing threat of terrorism and military action," said Mahathir. "Both have destabilizing effects on all countries."

"According to forecasts, the total market for defense exports to Asia alone is predicted to rise to $70 billion between 2002 and 2006. And it is expected to continue to rise," he added.

Mahathir said that Southeast Asian air and maritime defenses were particularly important "because most of the countries are made up of huge archipelagos with long coastlines and innumerable islands to be secured."

Malaysia itself embarked on a major arms spree recently, agreeing to buy Russian fighter jets for $900 million, French submarines for $972 million, British and Russian missile systems for $364 million and Polish attack tanks worth $368 million.

Mahathir said Malaysia had built a series of radar stations along the western coast to enable it to monitor traffic along the Strait of Malacca, as well as deployed more patrol boats and aircraft for surveillance.

"But there is a financial limit to what Malaysia can do to protect international shipping which passes through the straits in increasing numbers," he said.

"The world and in particular the nations whose ships make use of this waterway should also help in securing the passage," he said. *AFP*

Taiwan chief ignores China, US concerns on new charter

TAIPEI—Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian on Tuesday insisted his country needs a "new constitution" despite rival China's warning against what it saw as Taiwan's moves toward "gradual independence" and concerns raised by the United States.

Chen said it was time for Taiwanese people to consider a comprehensive adjustment of their existing constitution which he said was a compromise solution when Taiwan became a democracy after years of authoritarian rule.

"I hope the historic engineering of constitutional reform could be completed in 2006 to meet the demands of the 23 million people here," Chen said at the close of the Democratic Progressive Party's (DPP) regular meeting of its core members.

Taiwan's constitution, enacted by the former Kuomintang (KMT) government before it fled to the island in 1949 at the end of a civil war, has been amended six times by the KMT government since 1991.

Chen said the existing constitution no longer met the demands of Taiwan and the DPP would not follow the "wrong path" of the KMT government.

"The future constitutional reform would lay a solid foundation for the country."

However Chen was evasive as to whether the DPP would push for a "brand new" constitution or a dramatic amendment to the present constitution.

"The decision of future constitutional framework needs all the people to pool their wisdom and should be a brainchild of national discussion," he said. *AFP*

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8:30 am OPENING OF EXHIBITS

6th Bernardino Agustin Memorial Lecture
Co-Chairs: Adonis A. Guancia, MD
Rex Melchor D. Muyco, MD
8:30 am The State of Cancer Medicine in the Philippines
Speaker: ANTONIO H. VILLALON, MD

9:15 am COFFEE BREAK

Plenary Session I
Co-Chairs: Leilani D. Dantes, MD
Ma. Estrella S. Pudiquo-Santos, MD
9:30 am Vaccines in Cancer
Speaker: CORAZON A. NGELANGEL, MD
JORGE G. IGNACIO JR., MD

Convention Symposium I
Nutrition in Cancer Patients / Dietary Do's & Don'ts
Co-Chairs: Carolina M. Fulcis, MD
Christopher C. Peña, MD
10:00 am Speakers:
LUISITO O. LLIDO, MD
JONATHAN M. ASPRER, MD
GLORIA R. CRISTAL-LUNA, MD

Plenary Session II
Co-Chairs: Charity Charisse Viado N. Gorospe, MD
Ma. Luisa R. Ordoño, MD
11:00 Palliative Care in the Last 48 Hours
Speaker: CYNTHIA V. SAN LUIS, MD

Luncheon Satellite Symposium
11:30 am Setting New Standard in the Hormonal Treatment in Breast Cancer
Zometa-The Place of Zometa in Breast Cancer, Prostate Cancer and Lung Cancer
Speaker: TAN YEW OO, MD

Convention Symposium II
Cancer Screening
Co-Chairs: Alan Paul J. Olavere, MD
Pauline So-Kaw, MD
1:15 pm Breast Cancer
Speaker: BEATRICE J. TIANGCO, MD
Cervical Cancer
Speaker: CHRISTINE F. PALMA, MD
Prostate Cancer
Speaker: MICHAEL L. GASTON, MD
DISCUSSION

Convention Symposium III
Role of Chemoprevention
Co-Chairs: Anita L. Jesena, MD
Joselina P. Cruz, MD
2:15 pm Lung Cancer
Speaker: APOLONIO G. PASION JR., MD
Breast Cancer
Speaker: VALORIE FULLON-CHAN, MD
Colon Cancer
Speaker: GINA V. PANUNCIALMAN, MD

Convention Symposium IV
Infections in the Cancer Patient
Co-Chairs: Felycette Gay P. Martinez-Lapus, MD
Jaime Jesus D. Rojo, MD
3:15 pm Bacteremia in Cancer Patients
Speaker: MARGARITA L. CAYCO, MD
Fungal Infections in the Immunocompromised Host
Speaker: JENNIFER A. CHUA, MD
Use of GCSF's in Neutropenic Fever
Speaker: JUANITA LU-LIM, MD

4:15 pm BUSINESS MEETING

Friday, October 3, 2003

7:00 am - 12:00 nn REGISTRATION

8:30 am 10:30 am RESEARCH FORUM
Co-Chairs: Marie Cherry Lynn Samson-Fernando, MD
Alexander T. Delgado, MD
Jorge G. Ignacio, MD

Convention Symposium V
Management of Bone Metastases
Co-Chairs: Agnes Evangelista-Gorospe, MD
Felicitas V. Bugan, MD
10:30 am Orthopedic
Speaker: RAFAEL S. CLAUDIO, MD
Radiation Oncology
Speaker: MIRIAM JOY C. CALAGUAS, MD
Medical Oncology
Speaker: GRACILUX Y. FERNANDO, MD
DISCUSSION

Luncheon Satellite Symposium
11:30 am A New Generation Anti-Cancer Targeted Therapy: Iressa (GEFITINIB) in Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer
Speaker: MICHAEL CULLEN, MD

Panel Discussion
Medico-Legal Issues in Cancer Management
Co-Chairs: Jose S. Garcia, MD
Honey Santa J. Abuquez, MD
1:15 pm Speakers:
ANTONIO C. REBOSA, MD
BU C. CASTRO, MD
ANGELES TAN-ALORA, MD

Convention Symposium VI
Management of Brain Metastases
Co-Chairs: Ma. Noemi A. Uy, MD
Clinton Nazal-Malunog, MD
2:15 pm Radiation Oncology
Speaker: TERESA SY-ORTIN, MD
Medical Oncology
Speaker: DENNIS M. TUDTUD, MD
Neurosurgery
Speaker: THEODOR S. VESAGAS, MD

Convention Symposium VII
Psychosocial Issues in Cancer Management
Co-Chairs: Ma. Isabel D. Romano, MD
Jhade Lotus P. Peneyra, MD
3:15 pm Psychiatrist
Speaker: ANTONIO C. SISON, MD
Medical Oncology
Speaker: BETTY C. TALAVER, MD
Patient
Speaker: SOCORRO C. MARTINEZ, MD
DISCUSSION

Plenary Session III
Co-Chairs: Priscilla B. Caguioa, MD
Ma. Ermelinda D. Nocino-Balue, MD
4:15 pm Paradigm of New Development in Management of Lung Cancer
Speaker: TONY MOK, MD

4:45 pm CLOSING CEREMONIES

6:00 pm INDUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS
FELLOWSHIP NIGHT

ADVT

WORLDBRIEFS

Terrorist convicted in Belgian trial

BRUSSELS, Belgium—The lead suspect in Belgium's biggest-ever terrorism trial was convicted Tuesday of plotting to blow up the US military base Kleine Brogel in eastern Belgium. Nizar Trabelsi, a Tunisian who used to play professional soccer in Germany, faces up to 10 years in prison on the charge. He had admitted to planning to drive a car bomb into the canteen of the air base, where 100 US military personnel work. More verdicts were expected against 22 other suspected sympathizers of al-Qaida or violent Islamic groups on trial with Trabelsi. *AP*

Martyrs, not terrorists

KHALDIYAH, Iraq—The Iraqi forces battling US troops in a conservative Sunni Muslim bastion west of Baghdad don't consider themselves as terrorists or even supporters of Saddam Hussein but as Islamic "martyrs" fighting foreign infidels. "Each attack against the Americans is a celebration," says Ali Ilhabi, 48, echoing the words of most residents of Anbar, Khaldiyah, Fallujah and Ramadi, all of them west of Baghdad. Anti-US sentiment prevails in the area and violent attacks against US troops have occurred almost daily since the ouster of Saddam Hussein in April, prompting retaliation that often means deaths among Iraqi civilians. *AFP*

US soldier killed in Afghanistan

KABUL—A US soldier was killed and two others wounded in a clash with suspected Taliban rebels in southeastern Afghanistan, the US military said Tuesday. The clash occurred Monday near a coalition base at Shkin, in Paktika province, just a few miles from the Pakistan border, spokesperson Col. Rodney Davis said from Bagram Air Base, the US military headquarters in Afghanistan. "One coalition service member died of wounds received in combat and two others were wounded as a result of fighting on Monday near Shkin," Davis said in a statement. "Coalition forces killed two enemy fighters with direct small arms fire." *AP*

Schroeder popularity plunges

BERLIN—One in two Germans would vote for the conservative opposition in a snap election, according to a poll released on Tuesday, confirming a sense of widespread discontent with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's government. The survey for RTL television and the weekly news magazine Stern found the Christian Union alliance on 50 percent, up three points on last week. Schroeder's Social Democrats were credited with 26 percent, their lowest of the year and down two points from last week. *AFP*

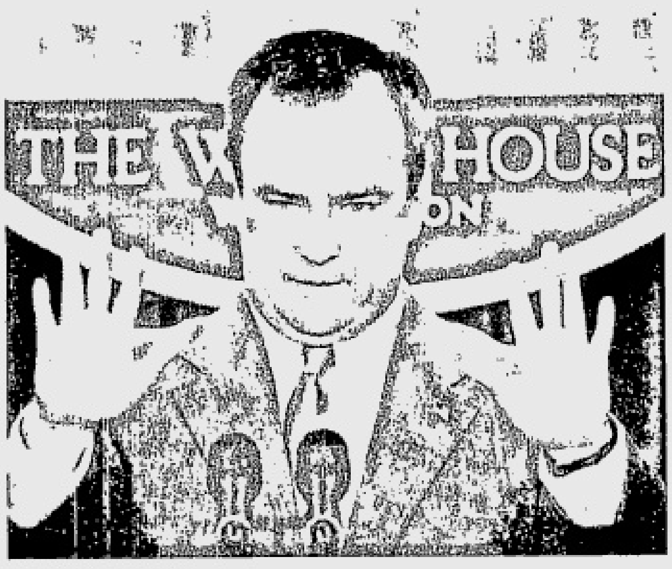
Shifting blame for Iraq dilemma

DAMASCUS, Syria—US-Syrian relations, strained for decades, are being further stressed by Washington's war on terrorism and its charges that Syria is letting foreign fighters into Iraq to attack American troops. The arrests of two US servicemen with links to Syria who were stationed at the Guantanamo prison camp in Cuba have also led to US suspicions that Damascus is engaged in spying against Washington, further complicating ties. Syria sees Washington's accusations about Iraq as an attempt to shift the blame for its growing difficulties in the Mideast nation. Bush administration officials have repeatedly accused Syria of impeding the US war in Iraq, first by allowing shipments of military goods to reach Saddam Hussein's forces before and during the fighting, and now by allowing foreign fighters to cross from Syria into Iraq. *AP*

SARS cost Asia $18B

MANILA—The Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic cost developing countries in Asia a total of $18 billion, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said Tuesday. However, the total would amount to nearly $60 billion if loss in demand and business costs were included, it added. "The economic costs were very high compared to the actual scale of the disease," said ADB chief economist Ifzal Ali. He credited Asian governments with acting swiftly to control SARS, "otherwise the potential scale of the losses would have been many times higher." *AFP*

Flap over leak embarrasses White House



PRESS Secretary Scott McClellan fends off a barrage of questions from reporters Sept. 29 during the daily press briefing at the White House regarding "senior administration officials" possible involvement in security violations involving the release of the identity of a covert CIA operative. AFP

WASHINGTON—The pressure for a justice department investigation into the leaking of a CIA agent's name is creating a political storm for a White House otherwise known for its discipline and tight message control.

It also is providing fresh ammunition for Democratic criticism of President George W. Bush's Iraq policy and threatening to widen a White House-CIA rift.

White House officials on Monday vigorously denied that they played any role in disclosing the identity of a CIA operative whose husband, former Ambassador Joseph Wilson, has challenged Bush's claims of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

At issue is whether White House officials deliberately leaked the name to syndicated columnist Robert Novak and other selected journalists in July in retaliation and in an attempt to blunt Wilson's criticism. Novak wrote that he got the name from "two senior administration officials."

Democrats in Congress and on the campaign trail on Monday demanded appointment of an independent counsel to investigate.

"The leaking of the name of a CIA operative is a dastardly act," said Sen. Charles Schumer of New York.

"It's wrong, it's shady, it's cheap," said retired Gen. Wesley Clark, one of 10 Democratic presidential hopefuls.

White House spokesperson Scott McClellan argued that the justice department "is the appropriate agency to look into matters like this." He said, however, that the president considered the leak "a very serious matter" and that he wanted anyone with information about it to contact the justice department.

Federal law makes it a crime for anyone to disclose the identity of covert US intelligence officers.

McClellan, in particular, denied that Bush's chief political strategist, Karl Rove, was involved. "It is ridiculous" to suggest so, he said. Wilson has suggested that Rove either initiated or condoned the leak.

The incident is providing another potential irritant to the strained relationship between the White House and the CIA, whose director, George Tenet, is a holdover from the Clinton administration.

The CIA's Office of General Counsel reported the leak to the justice department last July. It did not call for a specific investigation of the White House.

Previously, the CIA sought to distance itself from Bush's assertion in his January State of the Union address that Saddam Hussein was shopping in Africa for "significant quantities" of uranium ore for use in atomic weapons.

Tenet had questioned the veracity of that allegation, based on a discredited British intelligence report, and had argued against including the passage in the president's speeches. Administration officials later acknowledged the error.

The latest tempest comes amid accusations by congressional Democrats and some Republicans that the United States went to war on the basis of outdated and vague intelligence.

Even though Iraq's purported weapons of mass destruction were a major rationale for the US-led war, none have been found five months after Bush declared major combat over.

Controversy over the leak could complicate the administration's efforts to persuade Congress to provide $87 billion for Iraq and Afghanistan and other nations to contribute cash and troops.

"If true, it's a major blow to this administration. It strikes directly where this administration is vulnerable, squarely in its credibility," said Alan J. Lichtman, a political scientist at American University. *AP*

Long stay at space station proves humans can make trip to Mars

WASHINGTON—Astronauts stranded for two extra months aboard the International Space Station after the shuttle Columbia accident showed that humans are strong enough to make the long trip to Mars, one of the expedition's members said on Monday.

Donald Pettit, one of three members of the station's Expedition Six, said he and his two crew mates who spent 161 days on the space station inadvertently demonstrated humans' fitness for interplanetary travel.

"The whole experience had an uncanny resemblance to a trip to and landing on Mars," Pettit said at a briefing at the Nasa headquarters, referring to the extended stay in orbit and the return to Earth aboard a Russian Soyuz space taxi, which landed in Kazakhstan on May 3.

"We were on orbit in a reduced-gravity environment for 5-1/2 months, about as long as a one-way trip to Mars," Pettit said. "We got in our own vehicle, piloted it down to Earth through an air-brake maneuver ... Without any help from the ground we secured the spacecraft, we opened the hatch, we crawled out ...

"All of this demonstrates human beings have enough physical strength and integrity to go on these long missions, pilot vehicles through operational paths, secure equipment and operate immediately," he said.

The Expedition Six crew was not picked up for more than four hours after they landed.

Pettit said the demonstration was not planned, but said Expedition Six demonstrated "that there are no barriers for human physical performance to a trip to and a landing on Mars."

Pettit, along with the expedition's commander, Kenneth Bowersox, and Russian cosmonaut Nicolai Budarin, began their tour last Nov. 23 and were to return to Earth in early March.

However, when the shuttle Columbia disintegrated on reentry on Feb. 1, killing all seven people aboard, the shuttle fleet was grounded, meaning no shuttle would be bringing Expedition Six home and replacing them with a new crew. The Soyuz brought them down instead, and brought a two-person crew to the station.

While aboard the station, Pettit said he and the other crew members performed "Saturday morning science," beyond their prescribed research.

Just as what happens in Earthbound laboratories, he said, scientists aboard the space station can now do programmatic science as required, but also what he called the "science of opportunity"—those scientific inquiries prompted by circumstance and curiosity.

Bowersox dubbed such experiments "Saturday morning science," because Pettit did them on Saturdays, when those aboard the station had some free time.

One such experiment was the investigation of how water moved when drawn into a thin film by a loop of wire, Pettit said. He watched how the water in the low-gravity environment of the station behaved when warmed and lighted by a flashlight or the light from a video camera. *Reuters*

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Across the NATION

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

VISAYAS BUREAU
c/o Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
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Army captain linked to youths' slay

DAVAO CITY—The New People's Army linked an Army captain and two more soldiers in last week's death of militant youth leaders in Maco, Compostela Valley.

But the military said the rebel group should not resort to "trial by publicity" to gain sympathy.

Rigoberto Sanchez, spokesperson of the NPA's Merardo Arce Command operating in Southern Mindanao, said Capt. Denmark Mamaril, Sgt. Roy Telang and an Adan Marcus, all of the military's Intelligence Security Unit were with the group of armed men who snatched Anakbayan members Marjorie Reynoso, Jonathan Benaro, Lito Doydoy, and motorcycle driver Ramon Regase Jr. near the Hijo Plantation in Maco on Sept. 19.

Earlier, human rights group Karapatan identified Willy Jorolan, an alleged military intelligence asset, as one of the armed men who forcibly took the victims.

Sanchez said after abducting the youth leaders and Regase, Mamaril's group brought them to a safe house in Trento, Agusan del Sur.

He said it was in the same safe house that the suspects raped Reynoso, 18, who was also chair of the Sangguniang Kabataan in Barangay Anislagan in Maco.

The decomposing bodies of the victims were unearthed inside the Selecta Banana Plantation in Compostela town on Sept. 23.

They were tortured to death, according to police investigators.

But Lt. Col. Agane Adriatico, commander of the 5th Civil Relations Group for Southeastern Mindanao, said the allegations were aimed at destroying the military's image.

He challenged Sanchez to file formal charges against Mamaril and the other suspects it linked to the abduction-killing.

"Sanchez should refrain from trial by publicity. If he has strong evidence then he should file a formal complaint against those military personnel," he said.

Adriatico said Mamaril was busy facilitating the surrender of Dionisio Tungko alias Commander Bebit when the abduction took place.

Bebit surrendered on Sept. 22.

Earlier, the military admitted it was spying on youth groups but only to monitor if the militant youths were "misbehaving."

The military did not say what it meant by misbehavior but several youth groups had protested they were being tailed by suspected military agents.

Youth groups had said they feared for their members' lives following the abduction-killings and amid the continued surveillance by the military.

The abductions and harassment of militant groups allegedly by the military prompted Bayan Muna party list Rep. Satur Ocampo to propose that militant groups be allowed to arm themselves for self-defense.

Militant groups described the assault on their members as reminiscent of martial law when hundreds of detractors and critics of the Marcos regime disappeared and were later found dead or detained. *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Bayan Muna says military agents abducted leader

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—An official of Bayan Muna in Cebu has accused members of the Regional Intelligence and Investigation Division (RIID) of the Police Regional Office in Central Visayas of abducting their regional coordinator Friday evening.

But Arman Perez, Cebu coordinator of Bayan Muna, did not identify yet the alleged victim since "he is still in a state of shock."

"We are still convincing the victim's family to let him come out in the open and reveal his ordeal," he said.

Perez claimed that at least two members of the RIID suddenly disembarked from a dark green and heavily tinted Mitsubishi L-300 van at around 7 p.m. on Friday along Osmeña Boulevard, near the Development Bank of the Philippines building, and forced the victim to get into the van.

Perez said the victim was about to go home for Mandaue City after their meeting with members of Bayan Muna-Inayawan chapter.

According to Perez, the victim was brought to an RIID safe house in Lapulapu City.

Perez alleged that the abductors even offered the victim to become an "asset" (informer) of the RIID.

The alleged abductors also interrogated the victim about the activities of Bayan Muna and the whereabouts of Fr. Rustico Tan and Silvino "Ka Bino" Clamucha, the spokesperson of the New People's Army in Central Visayas.

Father Tan is identified by the Armed Forces of the Philippines Central Command (Centcom) as the one who carried the alias "Tikoy" and has become the successor of Roy Erecre, the former head of the Central Visayas Regional Party Committee of the CPP-NPA.

Tan, a priest who joined the rebel movement during the Marcos regime, surfaced in 1986 when he was named member of the panel of the National Democratic Front in Central Visayas negotiating peace with the government. He returned to the underground movement after the talks collapsed.

Perez also revealed that the kidnapping of their regional coordinator was part of the Oplan Bantay Laya, an alleged joint operation of the police and the Centcom intended solely to monitor their group's activities.

Perez said a lawyer of Bayan Muna fetched the victim at the safehouse on Saturday evening after the victim was able to call him up. The victim was left alone by his abductors in the supposed safe house, according to Perez.

Supt. Melchor Fajardo, the Chief of the RIID, vehemently denied the allegation and described it as "disinformation" against RIID.

He, however, admitted that the RIID has been monitoring the activities of Bayan Muna. "This is inherent in our job," he said.

2 rebels captured after Negros clash

BACOLOD CITY—Two suspected New People's Army rebels were captured, one of them wounded, following a gun battle with Army soldiers Sunday in Sitio Hiyangon, Barangay Magticol, Toboso, Negros Occidental, 114.5 km northeast of here.

Maj. Nelson Gerona, 303rd Infantry Brigade spokesperson, yesterday said the encounter between a team of militiamen and soldiers led by Sgt. Nelson Pabilona and about 10 NPA guerrillas around 9 p.m. Sunday, was triggered by reports relayed to them by civilians on the presence of armed men who were engaged in extortion activities.

Gerona said the five-minute gunfight led to the capture of suspected rebels Elmer Muñoz and Bongcaoil Entroliso. A 357 magnum revolver and .38 caliber revolver were recovered from them.

Muñoz, who suffered bullet wounds in the hands and the right leg, was brought by his captors to the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Memorial Hospital in Bacolod City.

Entroliso, on the other hand, was turned over by the 11th Infantry Battalion Bravo Company soldiers to the Toboso police station for detention, according to 1Lt. Clarence Garrido, 11th IB Civil Military Operations chief. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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Increase in rabies cases worsens vaccine shortage

TACLOBAN CITY—More than 1,400 cases of rabies including 15 deaths have been reported in Eastern Visayas this year, resulting in the shortage of government anti-rabies vaccines in the region.

The Department of Health regional office said that of the 15 who died of rabies, 11 were from Leyte, two from Northern Samar and another two from Eastern Samar. Of the fatalities, only seven with ages ranging from 5 to 57 years old were brought to the hospital where they died, while the remaining eight died in their homes.

Ligaya Anacta Acosta, health regional information officer, said that the number of deaths due to rabies during the first nine months of this year is very much higher compared to only seven reported rabies deaths in the region during the whole of last year.

Acosta said that records of the Regional Epidemiology Surveillance Unit showed that as early as June this year, 1,400 dog bites have already been reported with the number of cases noted to be still increasing, resulting in the shortage of DOH-provided anti-rabies vaccines.

She said the total allocation for Eastern Visayas this year was 2,170 vials of anti-rabies vaccines, costing more than P1 million. A dog bite case needs two vials to ensure protection of the victim against the disease.

The DOH has been urging local government units to purchase anti-rabies vaccines for their use because of the shortage of DOH-provided vaccines.

Dr. Nicolas Bautista, DOH coordinator for the Rabies Control Program, said that had there been proper screening of dog bite cases, the shortage of anti-rabies vaccines could have been prevented.

Bautista emphasized that vaccines should not be given until after the dogs involved had been observed for 14 days, and if the animals will not die it means that they are not rabid and there is no more need to give vaccines to the victims of dog bite. *Vicente Labro, PDI Visayas Bureau*

GRADUATION DAY
US military experts chat during the graduation of more than 200 Filipino soldiers after a six-week US-led antiterrorism training held in Zamboanga City recently. At least 500 American soldiers are in the country to train Filipino soldiers. AFP

ROUNDUP

Cop chief sacked

DELFIN ALBANO, Isabela—The police chief here was relieved last week for his failure to solve a P600,000-bank robbery in San Antonio village early this month. Senior Supt. Nelson Nario, Isabela police director, assigned Senior Insp. Arturo Arconsil to the provincial police. Arconsil was replaced by Senior Insp. Agustin Tongcol. Nario urged rural bank managers to hire permanent security guards especially at night. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Dengue cases up

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Health officials here expressed alarm over the increase in the number of dengue cases in Central Luzon after 17 people died in the region. Dr. Jessie Fantone, regional epidemiologist, said 1,560 dengue cases have been reported in the seven provinces. Pampanga has the highest number of dengue cases with 715, followed by Nueva Ecija, 315, and Bulacan, 264. Fantone said 11 of the 17 dengue fatalities were reported in Pampanga, four in Bulacan, and one each in Bataan and Aurora. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Kidnappers feared

ANGELES CITY—Kidnap-for-ransom gangs have been causing fear among the Chinese community after three of its members were abducted. On Sept. 19, a daughter of a wealthy Chinese businessman was abducted in Barangay Balibago here but was released in San Fernando City. Last month, another couple was kidnapped and released separately here and in Bataan. Police said no ransom was paid. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Plane's tire explodes

CEBU CITY—One of the tires of a Cebu Pacific plane exploded when it landed at the Mactan Cebu International Airport (MCIA) at about 10 a.m. on Thursday. No one was hurt among 67 passengers of Cebu Pacific flight 5J 564, said Vivica Singson, Cebu Pacific corporate communications manager. The tire on the plane's right outer portion exploded after a failure of the brake locking mechanism, said Ahmed Cuizon, MCIA the manager of the Public Affairs Division of MCIA. *Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Regional center

CALAPAN CITY—The provincial government of Oriental Mindoro is bent on being the regional government center of Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan). Calapan City and Bansud town have offered their respective areas for the center. Pinamalayan which is also being considered as the town is located at the center of the province. The regional office of the Register of Deeds is already in the province while the Mimaropa Police Regional Office and the National Statistics Office regional office will be put up here. Occidental Mindoro and the province of Marinduque also want to be the Mimaropa regional government center. *Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Attempted rape in jail

BATANGAS CITY—A female inmate in the Batangas provincial jail has accused its deputy warden of attempting to rape her inside the jail on Sept. 16 while the female inmates were undergoing a roll-call. Ana (not her real name), 32, who has been in the provincial jail for eight months on drug possession charges, identified her attackers as provincial deputy warden Renato Calingasan. "Calingasan pulled me into his room and there, he attempted to rape me. I fought back and got out of the room but he still ran after me and gave me P10. He said the money was for my silence," Ana told Gabriela members and investigators from Rep. Liza Maza's office. Calingasan was a former provincial warden relieved from duty in March 2002 for allowing two big-time drug convicts to escape out of prison. *Mel Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Pusher nabbed

LEGAZPI CITY—Members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and Legazpi police arrested a suspected drug pusher in Barangay Sabang here after a raid on Thursday. Col. Danilo Martinez, CIDG chief operations officer identified the suspects as Allan Almayda and Antonio Magdaong. Confiscated from Almayda were three sachets of shabu and other drug paraphernalia. *Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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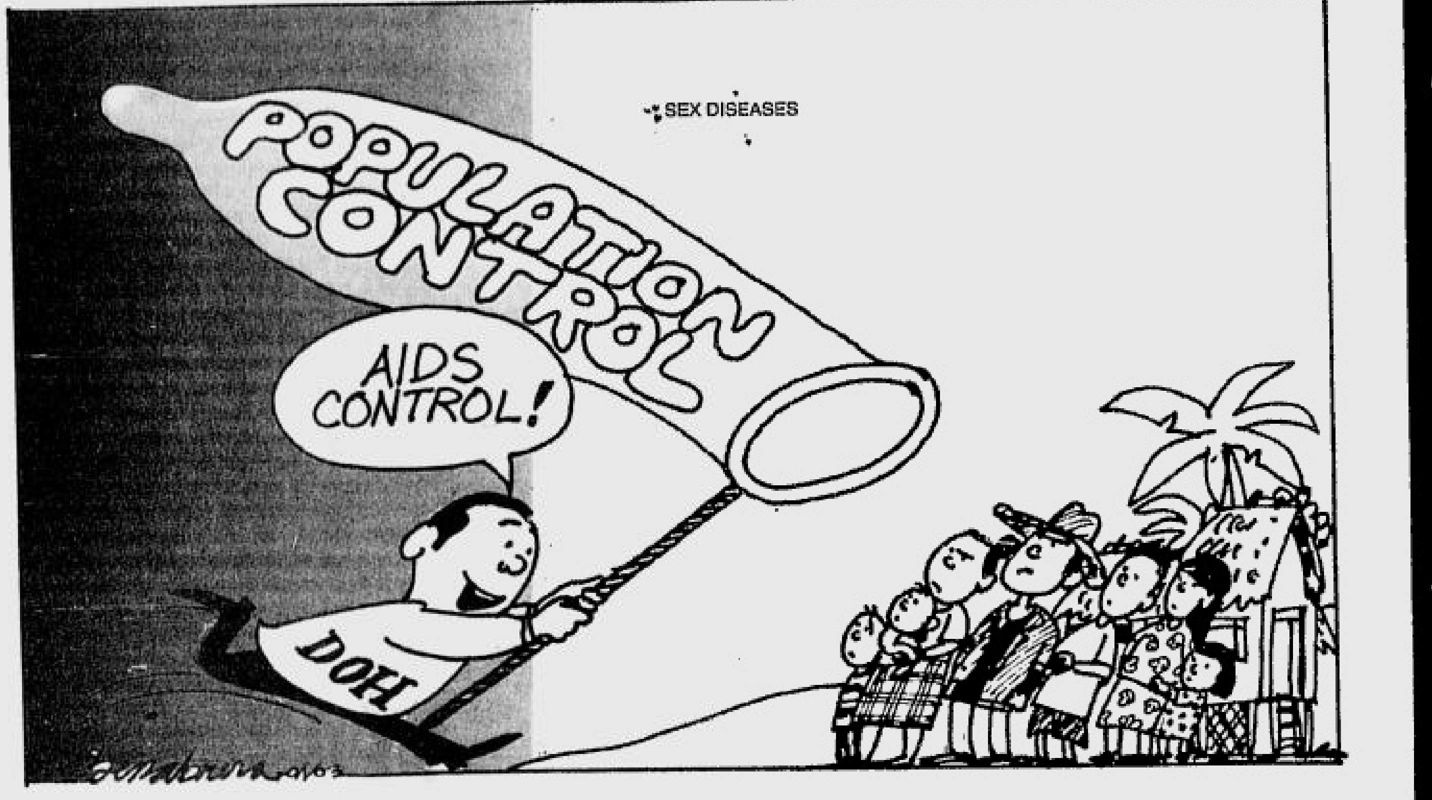


Wild child

EDITORIAL

THE POSITIVE thing resulting from the tawdry saga involving Cory Aquino's wild child is that it has provoked thoughtful discussions on issues not only of gender but also of media exploitation and self-worth. Laid open as well to scrutiny is the caliber of so-called public servants, the sort that spring unembarrassed from the ripe fields of basketball and show biz, and who somehow manage to amass the wherewithal to allow them to declare that they are wealthier than one of the owners of Hacienda Luisita. In one of the chapters of her tell-all epic, Kris Aquino quoted her ex-lover, the city mayor, as saying as much—a skillful jab on her part suggesting that there are facets to train public attention and official suspicion on, apart from the supposedly sorry state of his sexual health. (Think overpriced brooms, at the very least.)

Indeed, how could the mayor have become even wealthier than the mother of his ex-mistress? Granted that he made the boast in the heat of the moment (and by accounts, there were many moments of rage in their dalliance), surely he was not just provoked into doing so? Could his past fair-to-middling performance on the basketball court, or his current mugging on TV, have earned him the big bucks? Or perhaps more stringent attention should be directed to official matters such as city contracts, and thence to luxurious condos, nifty cars and high-powered guns?

Aquino's filing of criminal charges against Marquez will hopefully mop up the steam generated by her account of their rocky life together, riveting by virtue of a face that does extremely well in close-ups, a presence indicating that she is to the medium born, and a glibness that would have done her father proud. But this is a wistful thought in this neck of the woods, where, by dint of the same riveting account, the whole imbroglio is now being viewed largely from a sexual perspective. (Think leering men—and women—sending and forwarding salacious Kris text jokes.)

Not that the former president's darling daughter has nothing to do with it. She has traipsed this road before, unabashedly presenting her throbbing heart to a public largely bereft of textured thought and eager only to be let in on the base details. Now she has upped the ante. And her continuing foray into households and offices nationwide (thanks to her "mother" network that is earning tremendous ratings) to offer another paroxysm from her spleen and other vital organs only serves to strengthen this fundamental image: a powerful woman saddled by an astoundingly low self-esteem.

Yet this tragic flaw—of thinking so lowly of oneself that one scrapes the bottom of the barrel for love (or what passes for it); of enduring savagery from her partner, both physical and not; of continually declaring oneself "broken" and "damaged goods"—is not entirely beyond repair. As the psychologist Sylvia Estrada-Claudio put it, in cautioning women's groups against making a heroine of Aquino for her disclosure of the violence that constantly attended her relationship with Marquez, she should strive to go beyond victimhood and get on with her life. (Aquino herself had earlier announced her thoughts on what this life would include—a run for public office, which is not entirely unexpected given her lineage and the unmistakable slick quality that shows her to be her father's daughter. And with which she had twitted her brother: she being, in her own estimation, "the one.")

Most of all, as the attentive observer wincing through Aquino's confessionals would agree, the woman should stop seeking forgiveness. She has done it many times before; the cup runneth over. (The writer Joan Didion said it well: "People with self-respect have the courage of their mistakes. They know the price of things. If they choose to commit adultery, they do not then go running, in an access of bad conscience, to receive absolution from the wronged parties.")

Once upon a time in the dark days of martial law, Ninoy Aquino riveted the nation for hours when he appeared on TV and, in discoursing on the prevailing political paralysis, unnerved the Marcos dictatorship and made of his interviewer Ronnie Nathanielsz a veritable doorstop. How ironic that his daughter would pull off a similar feat decades later, but on a shorter scale, and only to provide cheap entertainment.

Lawyer explains Mike-Toh contradictions

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

I GOT a quick reaction from the hardworking lawyer Jesus Santos, counsel for First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, on our Sept. 29 column. That column pointed out apparent contradictions in the public statements of the Toh siblings (Vicky Toh, Thomas Toh, and brother-in-law Kelvin Tan) and of FG Mike himself and his kid brother Ignacio, regarding the bank accounts mentioned by Sen. Panfilo Lacson in his privilege speeches.

Lacson had claimed that all the bank accounts, though in the names of Jose Pidal and the three Tohs, really belonged to Mike A. Big Mike denied this, saying he didn't know who Jose Pidal was. The Tohs came out with their own statement, claiming that the bank deposits in their names are really theirs, not Mike's.

Later, Little Brother Iggy came out of nowhere and claimed that the Jose Pidal accounts (there were two) were his. He also said that in 2001, he had told Big Mike that he was closing the accounts because the Anti-Money Laundering Act (Amla), then about to take effect, prohibits bank deposits under fictitious names.

Big Mike himself confirmed that: Yes, he was told about the Jose Pidal account by Iggy back in 2001.

The apparent contradictions pointed out by the Sept. 29 column: If Big Mike had known as early as 2001 that Iggy was Jose Pidal, why did he say in September 2003, that he didn't know who Jose Pidal was? If the Tohs had admitted early on that the bank accounts cited by Lacson were really theirs, why did the different banks issue certifications that those bank accounts "do not exist"? Rather confusing, aren't they?

Lawyer Santos tries to clear the confusion. I am quoting his letter verbatim; see if it clears up your own confusion:

"This refers to your column, 'Contradictions in statements of Mike and the Tohs.' (PDI, 9/29/03)

"On Sept. 23, 2003, Atty. Gelacio Mamaril submitted to the Senate the certifications of the seven local banks on the non-existence of bank accounts mentioned by Sen. Panfilo Lacson in his Sept. 1 privilege speech. Atty. Mamaril said the bank certifications answered Senator Lacson's queries on the existence of the bank accounts.

"It is very clear from these bank certifications that those Sept. 1 assertions of Senator Lacson were false and utterly baseless.

"In the same privilege speech last Sept. 1, Senator Lacson alleged that two remittances in January and May this year amounting to P4.4 million were deposited to the Jose Pidal account, from the International Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) Hong Kong branch account of Ricardo Medrano.

"This was denied by the ICBC, which put out advertisements saying 'no such account of Ricardo Medrano with account number 56102-000494-2 has ever existed in the Hong Kong Branch of the International Commercial Bank of China.'

"It is very clear from these bank certifications and statements that in his Sept. 1 speech, Senator Lacson fabricated all those bank account numbers to besmirch the reputation of the First Gentleman.

"As for the Jose Pidal accounts mentioned in his first speech, they were admitted by both the bank and Atty. Mike Arroyo's brother Ignacio, as having existed and closed in 2001 before the enactment of the Anti-Money Laundering Act.

"There is no public interest involved. The account is private and Mr. Ignacio Arroyo is a private citizen and a successful businessman.

"If there are no public funds, there can be no public interest. They were purely private funds and private transactions involving a private account of someone who is not a public official.

"Instead of doubting the integrity of the seven Philippine banks and one international bank, Senator Lacson should answer the following questions:

"• Did he go overseas to move his hidden wealth away from the reach of Blanquita Pelaez and the US government, which has been investigating his hidden wealth?

"• Where is the evidence to support his charges against the First Gentleman, Iggy Arroyo and other innocent people maligned by his speeches?

"• How many homes did he own in the US, and did he report these in his SAL while PNP chief?

"• Lacson and his wife Alice sold their home at 1011 Laguna Seca Loop, Chula Vista, California for $185,000 in 1999, while he was PNP Chief. Was this ever reported in his SAL?

"• How much money did he and his wife really stash away before, during and after the Estrada administration? Where did these funds come from? Where are they now?"

* * *

Graft and corruption is the biggest problem that will confront the nation in next year's elections, Sen. Loren Legarda told the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday. She warned that the country could backslide further unless the electorate chooses as leaders those who would wage a real war against graft and corruption.

"What we need is a leader who really understands the country's problems, a leader who would put a stop to graft and corruption which, according to studies, eats up 40 to 50 percent of government resources," she said.

Is that leader perchance Loren Legarda?

Reply: "Truth be told, I feel that I have contributed to the cause of the people and the nation as a legislator with the many laws that I have authored or co-sponsored. Still, I feel that I could do more given the chance to serve in the executive department."

The senator said she is seriously thinking of running for vice president.

With whom? In what party?

She answered she will have to "consult her political leaders, constituents, friends and family." She said she would likely make an announcement in the coming two weeks.

Still, God

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I DON'T know if you believe in signs. But at the very time Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo went to Rome to seek enlightenment, the whole place was plunged into darkness. According to reports, the blackout paralyzed the city state, freezing transportation and communication, and throwing GMA's schedule into disarray. It messed up as well the lives of journalists, who could not send stories to their home offices. For once though, the Filipinos in Rome found their cell phones useful in more ways than to send text jokes with. The fuzzy light the phones emitted was enough to help them wind their way in their hotel rooms, or wherever they were when the power outage struck.

Even Rome, the Eternal City, can sometimes be made to feel temporal. Indeed, old and weary. But if you're a believer, you're bound to think God is sending a message to someone who keeps invoking His name for not very godly ends. Someone who keeps refusing to hear what he has to say. In this digital age, blackouts may be the physical equivalent of lightning bolts.

Shortly before the blackout, GMA had just announced that the Pope had blessed the Philippines through her. I leave the more theologically qualified to argue cause and effect. "We want to pursue our goals for the country in ways that we perceive more akin to how God would want us to do it. That's the greater conviction I received after meeting again with his Holiness." The Pope, she added, "is a very inspiring presence in our life, in my personal life and in the life of our nation."

Well, it's good to know that a Filipino who is not a priest or nun can feel the divine electricity surging through her and thence to her nation in 10 minutes of being with the Pope. The Pope met longer with incoming Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, and several Filipino bishops who have helped build a "Church of the Poor" in this country, but none of them reported to have been similarly energized, enough to send the juices flowing to their bishoprics back home. Such was the electricity surging through GMA it seemed to have drained not just the heavenly supply but the earthly one.

That is one explanation for the blackout. The other is that God was pushed too far and took exception to the blasphemy. GMA said that the Pope has been a very inspiring presence "in our life, in my personal life and in the life of the nation," but there is no evidence, earthly or divine, for it. The most inspiring presence in our life, in GMA's personal life, and in the life of the nation in fact is not Pope John Paul II, it is George Bush II. It is not John Paul II that GMA takes to be God's direct representative on earth, it is George Bush II. It is not the Burning Bush GMA takes to be the Mosaic oracle, it is the Torching Bush.

If the Pope has been very firm on something, it is that George Bush's war on Iraq is wrong. It is that George Bush's version of "war against terror" is wrong. It is that plunging the world into Armageddon, arraying the forces of Good vs. Evil into the US and allies vs. everybody else, you are with me or against me, is wrong. It is that unsheathing the sword for ungodly ends is wrong. It is that embracing the ways of war rather than of peace is wrong. It is that George Bush and Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld and their ilk are wrong. It is that the "coalition of the conscripted" is wrong.

Morally, ethically, damnably wrong. If this is a battle of Good vs. Evil, the Good won't be found in the Bush camp. God won't be found in the Bush camp. That is the camp to which GMA belongs. So how in God's name—never has that phrase been more apt—can the Pope be a most inspiring presence in our life, in GMA's personal life, in the life of the nation she has led?

Not quite incidentally, the Pope is in front running for the Nobel Peace Prize. If he wins, it will be two in a row for the Peace Prize to go to someone opposed to Bush's view of Pax Americana. The last winner was Jimmy Carter, who also spoke bitterly against it.

There is one other thing the Pope has been very firm about. It is that the WTO-GATT version of "globalization" (truly, this in an age that does violence not just to people but to language!) is wrong. It is that the new siphoning of wealth by the North from the South as a result of it is wrong. It is that new inequality in the world economic order it is producing is wrong. It is that the poverty and ignorance the people of the South countries have been plunged into is wrong. It is that destruction of the industries and livelihood of South countries is wrong. It is that the joblessness and despair among the poor is wrong. It is that the WTO and IMF and GATT are wrong.

Morally, ethically, damnably wrong. That is why the Pope made it a point to draw attention to the plight of the poor by meeting with the Filipino bishops who have devoted their lives to building a church for them. Same question: How in God's good name can the Pope be a most inspiring presence in our life, in GMA's personal life, in the life of the nation she has led?

Of course GMA was among the first to hail the results of the world trade meeting in Cancun, which led to the South countries blocking the spurious liberalization proposed by the WTO. Well, she also hailed peace in the UN as the right path to take, when surrounded by a world that demanded it. Yet she was the most ardent espouser of the WTO-GATT, being its main proponent in the GATT debate of 1995, evoking a paradise to come from the passage of the treaty. Just as she has been the most aggressive warmonger in Asia, calling on her neighbors to unite behind the Christian jihad.

The Pope is enfeebled only in body, not in mind. That is all it takes to hear God's voice, a clear mind.

And, well, a clean heart.

Politics that heals

COMMENTARY

Junefe Gilig Payot
Institute on Church and Social Issues

IN NIHONGO, the *kanji* (characters used in Japanese writing) that stands for "political administration" is read as *sei*. It is composed of two graphemes, the building blocks of *kanji*, that mean "correct" and "teacher." Thus, for students of Nihongo like me, a good way to remember how *sei* is written is to think that political administration is to teach what is correct. When *sei* is combined with *ji*, the *kanji* that means "to cure" or "to heal," one gets *seiji*, the Japanese word for "politics." So politics is political administration that heals whatever it is that needs to be healed.

My Chinese friend told me it is the same in Chinese, for the Japanese got their writing system from them.

Now these are just mnemonic devices which students of Nihongo like me come up with, but I strongly feel that this is how the Japanese and Chinese word for politics could very well have originated. Because it makes a lot of sense: political administration teaches what is correct and politics is political administration that cures. Except maybe if you are in the Philippines.

I said maybe, because politics is a vast area of human activity. And many people—teachers, NGOs, students, the religious—are involved in political activities that are good. But let me zero in on our politicians.

First, far from teaching what is correct, many of our politicians and government officials are exemplars of how not to be good public servants. A few weeks ago, I tried to contact the offices of some congressmen to ask them about how poor communities can access the Countrywide Development Fund, now called the Priority Development Assistance Fund, as if the change in name would change the suspicious nature of this pork-barrel fund. Out of the seven I contacted (I wanted to contact more but gave up), only one office readily accommodated me: that of Batanes Rep. Florencio "Butch" Abad. His staff was really knowledgeable and very transparent. They told me about the need for a barangay resolution requesting funds and a program of work detailing the project specifics, both of which will then be forwarded to their office. The other six, however, either didn't know how the PDAF was to be accessed by the public or refused to talk about it.

One staff member of a representative from Pampanga told me their chief of staff would know about it but that she was not around. When I asked for her cell phone number, I was told she did not have one. A chief of staff without a cell phone? Don't they always get the latest models? And don't they need one to strike suspicious political and financial deals?

Another staff member of a representative from the province of Cebu said that she didn't know much about the PDAF but added that its distribution depends a lot on whether the leaders of the community asking for help are allied with the congressman or not! Talk about representation! I thanked her for her candor (I think it was because I spoke to her in Cebuano) and for confirming everyone's suspicions about how the PDAF is really used.

Another one grilled me about how I got the number to their office. I told him it is on the House website, but he wouldn't believe me. For the next 15 minutes he kept insisting that I tell him the truth before finally saying that he didn't know a bit about the PDAF. I wouldn't be surprised if it was the Mindanaoan representative himself that I was talking to. It sounded like him. Talk about lack of transparency.

Secondly, far from curing society's ills, politics here seems to only cause division, pain and death to the people. Death from the often-violent rallies and military conflicts as well as the slow, silent and painful deaths in dingy places because of poverty. Far from curing poverty, the antics of our politicians seem to only aggravate it by their inaction. Now that lifestyle checks are being done supposedly to catch corrupt public servants, maybe the government should seriously consider making lifestyle checks on the poor as well just so they'll know how much poorer the poor have become. And maybe only then will they be moved into action.

It should be easier to conduct than the lifestyle checks on rich public servants because no poor person will try to hide his or her being poor. Neither do the poor have bank accounts and undeclared assets to conceal. Nor do they have houses with high fences that hide luxury cars. In fact, the walls and roofs of the poor's houses are riddled with holes so that the inspectors need not go inside the houses to see that they are practically bare.

It is sad that the poor and their poverty are only being used for political purposes. Aren't the past and the present presidents especially notorious on this account? In recent weeks, streamers calling for an "end to politicking" began appearing all over Metro Manila, especially in areas with big urban poor population. But of course, we know that the person who had those steamers put up is the very person who is into politicking.

Indeed, the state of politics as practiced by politicians in our country is far from ideal. If *hara-kiri* were practiced here like it was practiced before in Japan, we would be left with only a handful of politicians. But then again, *hara-kiri* has a lot to do with the feeling of shame, a feeling that doesn't fall within our politicians' limited range of genuine emotions.

All winners

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

BEFORE THE JUDGING for the Well Family Midwife Clinic Diamond Awards, verification teams went around the country to evaluate all the midwife-nominees, visiting the clinics, talking with their clients, staff, colleagues and employees of the national partner NGOs who provide support and advice to the midwives.

Fully 80 percent of the weight given to the scores of each finalist was determined by the verification results, with the final evaluation and interview of the judges making up just 20 percent of the final score. Even so, the interview process was enlightening and illuminating, at least on the part of the judges, though I don't know how much of an ordeal it was for the midwives.

The finalists were vying for four awards: the Mountain of Light Diamond Award for Excellence in Family Planning Initiatives, the Centenary Diamond Award for Excellence in Business Management, the Regent Diamond Award for Excellence in Leadership, and the Earth Star Diamond Award for Excellence in Patient Care.

I was one of six judges invited to sit in the final phase of the selection process, together with Population Commission Executive Director Tomas Osias, the Association of Foundations' Marissa Reyes, Integrated Midwives' Association president Alice dela Gente, business professor Dr. Benjamin Espiritu, and obstetrician-gynecologist and head of the Midwifery Exams board Dr. Rogelio Mendiola.

As recounted in yesterday's column, we were asked to sit on two panels each, reviewing the findings of the verification teams and the testimonies of the respondents, then "grilling" the finalists on their life and work as midwives and owners of their own clinics, as well as community leaders and educators.

* * *

WHAT particularly struck me as we talked with the midwives, striving to put them at ease while probing into their work habits and motivations, was their willingness to take on so many other roles besides that of health caregivers and entrepreneurs.

When we asked, for instance, if any of their clients ever came to them asking for an abortion, to a "woman," they replied that their work was to assist in the birthing of new life, not ending it. If the client asking for an abortion was a young woman, one said, she would usually advice the young woman to talk to her parents "since I know how it would feel if it was my child who was undergoing such a problem and keeping it a secret from me." More than one midwife admitted to having served as a go-between for a young client in trouble and her parents, even if it meant putting themselves in the middle of a sensitive situation.

"That is part of our responsibility," said one, "looking after the health of our clients includes helping with their emotional and family troubles." And in many cases, by getting themselves into such situations, the midwives end up adopting the babies of such troubled arrangements.

Congratulations, then to the winners of the first WFMC Diamond Awards, though as all of us judges agreed, all the finalists were winners, being recognized as outstanding midwives, outstanding women in a demanding profession. Here are the winners: Gertrudes Luderico, the Earth Star Diamond Award for Excellence in Patient Care; Anita Alojado, the Regent Diamond Award for Leadership; Carol Millan, the Centenary Diamond Award for Business Management; and Jocelyn Plaza, the Mountain of Light Diamond Award for Family Planning Initiatives.

* * *

I'M writing this column at the Shangri-la Golden Sands Resort in Penang, Malaysia, venue of the Asia Regional Workshop on Media Advocacy for Contraceptive Security.

Representatives from five Asian countries—Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines—are here to talk about a common problem: the dwindling supply and availability of contraceptive commodities and services in our respective countries. Reasons for this situation vary, including the decision in the mid-1990s of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to phase out the free donations of contraceptive supplies to "demographically mature" countries, as well as the lack of political will in these countries that has resulted in inadequate (even non-existent) budgets for family planning programs and supplies.

Another problem is what we in the Philippine delegation have termed the "free contraceptive mentality," the thinking that access to contraceptive supplies is an entitlement, and that the government is obliged to provide commodities like pills, IUDs, condoms and injectables to everyone who needs or wants them.

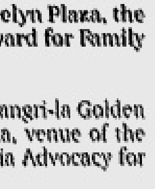
* * *

A STUDY made on the local situation shows that more than 60 percent of women who depend on the government or public sector for free contraceptives can actually afford it. Part of the strategy, then, is to encourage all those who can afford to pay for contraception or family planning services to begin seeing private doctors and buying their supplies from the commercial sector. The problem, though, is that pharmaceutical companies, drug stores and private doctors are still reluctant to get involved in family planning because they feel they cannot possibly compete with government which provides free services and commodities.

That's why this workshop is on media advocacy, because to get this change of mindset going, public attitudes and understanding of reproductive health and family planning issues must first change. And before politicians and policymakers can redirect policies and programs to respond to present needs, they must feel that there is sufficient public opinion support for such controversial actions. We truly have our work cut out for us in the next few days.

Thinking of Kris, Joey over mongo con hielo

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

BEING away from home provides some perspective on the scope of the Kris-Joey break-up. On the lurid topic, my mailbox was swamped with all sorts of messages that far outnumbered all the junk mail I now receive regularly from "presidentiables." From the quiet retreat of Kyoto, I could imagine how the world stopped in the Philippines for Kris and Joey. Some readers suggested I hook on the topic and write on Juan Luna who also poked a gun on his wife during a jealous rage. The main difference here is that Luna actually pulled the trigger and murdered both Mrs. Luna and his meddlesome mother-in-law.

Other readers requested a column on heroes with sexually transmitted disease, and all I could think of were the rumors, floated by Apolinario Mabini's political enemies, suggesting that our Sublime Paralytic was syphilitic. Post mortem autopsy has ruled out STD. Mabini's legs became useless due to polio. Yet the syphilis rumor is so hard to dispel. Given my limited experience, I cannot convince those who have made up their mind that one does not become a cripple due to venereal disease. Even *castrati* can sing and walk.

To get fresh air and ideas, I walked aimlessly around Kyoto and noticed three things: golden *Billiken* statues in antique shops, shaved ice and mongo in small restaurants and children playing *Jak en Poy*. All of the above were introduced in the Philippines at some point. The only question is whether we can trace their origins back to Japan.

Mongo con hielo and *halo-halo* are so much part of Philippine cuisine, we think they have been there forever, that these were probably indigenous. *Halo-halo* needed ice and the Philippines got its first taste of ice in the 19th century, when an ice ship carrying crystal clear blocks of ice from Wenham Lake, USA made a quick stopover in Manila before proceeding to India. Thus, *halo-halo* cannot be traced all the way back to pre-Spanish times. I don't think it was economical in the 19th century to shave imported ice into *halo-halo*, so perhaps we can date it to the turn of the 20th century when the Americans established the Insular Ice Plant by the Pasig. I presume Japanese settlers introduced *mongo con hielo*, which developed into that fantasy of mixed colors—candied banana, assorted beans, leche flan, ube ice cream—that we know today as *halo-halo*. Tracing food origins can sometimes lead to some surprises as most Filipinos do not know that corn and chico are just some of the crops introduced in the Philippines by the Spaniards from Mexico.

As I watched Japanese children play what I know as *Jak en Poy*, I was surprised to hear them shout "*Jan Ken Pon!*" as they formed in the air with their fingers the hand symbols for rock, paper and scissors. The rules of the game were simply familiar; even the rhyme they chanted "Attchi muite hoy! (Hey! Look here!) sounded just like the phrase we use in the Philippines "*Jak en Poy. Hali-hali hoy!*" (Come-come hey!). The Oy! Sound especially caught our interest because in the Philippines we used to chant "*Jak en poy mukhang unggoy*! Anyway, the game must have come to the Philippines from China or Japan, though one source on the Internet says *Jak en Poy* was known in ancient Egypt!

Significantly, just like with the *halo-halo*, the Filipinos improvised on *Jak en Poy's* rock, paper and scissors by adding two of our own finger flashing forms: *pako*/nail, symbolized by a clenched hand with a bent index finger sticking out, and *ulan*/rain, which is symbolized by a hand raised with all fingers wiggling spider-like. So when was the game introduced into the Philippines and from where? I leave that to the anthropologists.

As for *Billiken*, this is the elf-like figure with a big tummy and a mischievous smile. Naked except for a loincloth, he is depicted seated with arms on his sides and the soles of his big feet upright. I noticed a Japanese rubbing his feet for luck. No one in my generation knows about *Billiken* anymore, but as a historian I know *Billiken* was the mascot of the pre-war Manila Carnival. An Internet search led to the site of the St. Louis Billikens (not St. Louis University Baguio, this was SLU, USA). *Billiken* is the mascot of the SLU football team. *Billiken* did not originate from China or Japan or the Philippines but from the mind of a certain Florence Pretz of Kansas, Missouri who made the first *Billiken* patterned after Joss the Chinese God of "things as they ought to be." Or is this actually a corruption of a line from Rudyard Kipling's "Tenvoi" that reads: "shall draw the Thing as he sees it for the God of Things as They ARE!" Whatever its origins, *Billiken* became a fad. Manufactured in the thousands from 1909 to 1912, it became one of the first copyrighted dolls. *Billiken* is cute in a perverse sort of way and it would make an interesting study to wonder how this image was said to bring three types of good luck: If you bought a *Billiken*, he brought you luck. If you are given a *Billiken* as a present, it brought better luck. And to have a *Billiken* stolen from you brought the best luck.

While Manila enjoys Kris and Joey, your historian is in Kyoto looking at *Billikens*, trying *mongo con hielo* and watching children play *Jan Ken Pon*, following up links between Japan and the Philippines.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Engagement with China

CHINA has become the new El Dorado, a land of enormous promise and extraordinary profit. For the nations of Southeast Asia and especially the region's all-powerful taipans, the initial anxiety about China's booming industrial and manufacturing capacity has been replaced by a growing realization of the Middle Kingdom's potential as future marketplace as well as a source of tourists.

EYE ON ASIA

Karim Raslam

On my recent trip to Manila, my guide, herself of ethnic Chinese descent, explained: "The taipans are investing in southern China. Most of them can't be bothered with the Philippines any more; it's too small. My sons have Mandarin classes; it's their culture. However, I can't think of any non-Chinese Filipinos who've thought to learn the language."

Certainly Asean's trade with China (including Hong Kong) at $48 billion is booming, rising an unprecedented 29.3 percent in 2002 alone. While the United States, the European Union and Japan remain Asean's three largest trading partners with well over $85 billion in two-way trade each, growth rates have evaporated as figures slipped into negative territory.

Moreover, the scale of China's economic growth is breathtaking, so much so that most businessmen have to sit down after they go over the numbers. With an estimated 7 percent GDP growth, the excitement is tangible.

Certainly, for a first-time visitor, the capital of Beijing is a confusing if enervating maze of construction sites, shopping malls, sophisticated bars with erhyu-playing jazz singers, centuries-old courtyard homes and vast modern apartment complexes.

The streets are rushed and busy, teeming with impatient office workers. People dart in between bicycles, buses, private cars and concrete mixers. The city is wreathed in smog—the result of car fumes, hundreds of coal-fired generators and the fine reddish sand from the steppes to the northeast. The buzz is electric.

The Thai, Singaporean and Malaysian governments have ambitious plans for their engagement with China as new research institutes, scholarships and business ventures are launched. Tutors teaching Mandarin are booked solid across the region as Bangkok and Singapore turn themselves into important gateways to China with a host of flights to the less well known inland cities of Chengdu, Chonqing and Xian. Indeed the Charoen Pokphand group, led by the ethnic-Thai Chinese family, the Chearavanonts, recently launched Shanghai's Super Brand Mall, the city's largest retail center.

Similarly in Kuala Lumpur, the in-coming administration of Abdullah Badawi, in recognition of China's importance, is refocusing a two-decade old "Look East" policy away from Japan and Korea. Instead all eyes are on China and its tantalizing prospects. Bilateral trade between China and Malaysia soared by over 49 percent last year to $9.25 billion, making Malaysia China's seventh largest trading partner and its most important in Asean. Furthermore, well over half a million Chinese tourists visited the country spending more per day than their Japanese counterparts.

However, these plans will be derailed if the region's governments fail to encourage their substantial non-Chinese populations to get more involved in the burgeoning north-south relationship, because for Southeast Asia the engagement with China possesses certain risks. In dealing with China, we have to be mindful of the internal cleavages within our own respective nations. For centuries our societies have been fraught with racial tension. In the Philippines alone there have been anti-Chinese riots in 1603, 1639, 1662, 1686, 1762 and 1819. To ignore these age-old divisions is to ignore history—something we do at our peril.

And much of this strife is exacerbated by the sense of dislocation and marginalization felt by the native communities whether, Filipino, Thai, Javanese or Malays as they observe the mounting wealth and prosperity of the sojourners-turned-settlers from southern China. In the present context, access to China, the region's engine of growth, may well be the key to future wealth. If that access is controlled by ethnic Chinese businessmen, the net result could be an escalation in racial tension as the vast majority of Filipinos look on in silence.

As a result Southeast Asian politicians and businessmen must manage the relationship in an equitable and far-sighted manner. Relations with China must not become the sole domain of the region's all-powerful taipans. The bonds linking the Philippines, for example, to China must be multifaceted, deeply rooted and diverse. In short, the country's non-Chinese population must feel that they too are benefiting from the engagement; they must be active participants in the process.

In this respect, the Philippines has overcome a number of major linguistic, cultural and geopolitical hurdles. The first is an obsession with America and all things American. Rep. Nereus Acosta explains: "Generally Filipinos are very uncomfortable outside the English language milieu. As a result the ones who go to China will be predominantly those of Chinese descent. Non-Chinese Filipinos don't really think of sending their children to Chinese schools."

Another aspect of the over-close identification with the United States is a tendency amongst the Filipino elite, with their homes in New York and San Francisco, to see China as a threat and not an opportunity. Which leads me to my second point: Filipinos must acknowledge China's concerns over American attempts to contain the Middle Kingdom. The geopolitical disputes over the Spratlys and Mischief Reef as well as the many incidences of fish-poaching in the waters off Palawan are grounded in China's well-founded fears of being encircled.

As it is, the Philippines' neighbors are already steaming ahead. In Thailand, for example, the highly respected Crown Princess Sirindhorn is a fluent Mandarin speaker. Even in Malaysia, a country long known for its tense race relations, well over 40,000 Malay/Muslim students are currently attending Chinese language schools. If the Philippines is not to fall behind the rest of Asean once again, the country's leaders must move fast to address these weaknesses and expand the scope of engagement with Beijing radically. Maybe President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo should lead by example and start taking Mandarin classes?

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Pass the law for battered women's sake

MUCH had been written and said about the vicious cycle of violence that women suffer in the hands of their abusers. We can no longer close our senses to the sordid subjugation, battering and killing of women within the zones of intimate relations.

When a woman in a neighborhood cries out for help to be taken away from the violent blows of her husband or intimate partner, some neighbors do listen and rescue her. When an abused woman bares herself in national television pained and bruised, many, if not all of the public, are glued to her story. But the State has never listened.

By being born a woman in a society where women's realities split end with women's human rights, a person's dignity and well-being is held at gunpoint. Women are subjected to physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuse because of the baseless and arbitrary prescriptions on how and where a woman should place herself in society. By entering, for instance, into an intimate relationship, a woman is expected not only to satisfy her partner's demands (a.k.a., needs) but also suffers the consequences of such relationship in private. Her public disclosure of abuse may catapult her family and concerned entities to action, but the State will not intervene. Her story may earn momentary public interest, not as a serious social ill, though, but as a lovers' quarrel blown out of proportion.

Abuse of women in intimate relationships (AWIR) is a public menace that turns comfort zones into a pandemonium. It is not a mere lovers' tiff. Regardless of her relationship with her abuser, no violation of a woman's personhood and dignity is justified. Abuse, in whatever form, is never a natural consequence of intimate relations.

Without a law penalizing abuse of women in intimate relationships (AWIR), no woman is truly secured of her fundamental rights to life and liberty. The Anti-AWIR bill seeks to protect and fulfill these women's human rights. It recognizes AWIR as a public crime and penalizes all forms of abusive conduct against women in intimate relationships. The bill also protects victims from further harassment by their abusers. Yet, these novel and progressive legal provisions remain dormant because of the warped priorities of Congress.

We urgently ask our legislators to enact the Anti-AWIR law, for women's sake, for goodness' sake.

—ANNA ZITA B. ABUDA, executive director, Women's Legal Bureau Inc., 11 Matimtiman St., Teachers' Village, Diliman, Quezon City

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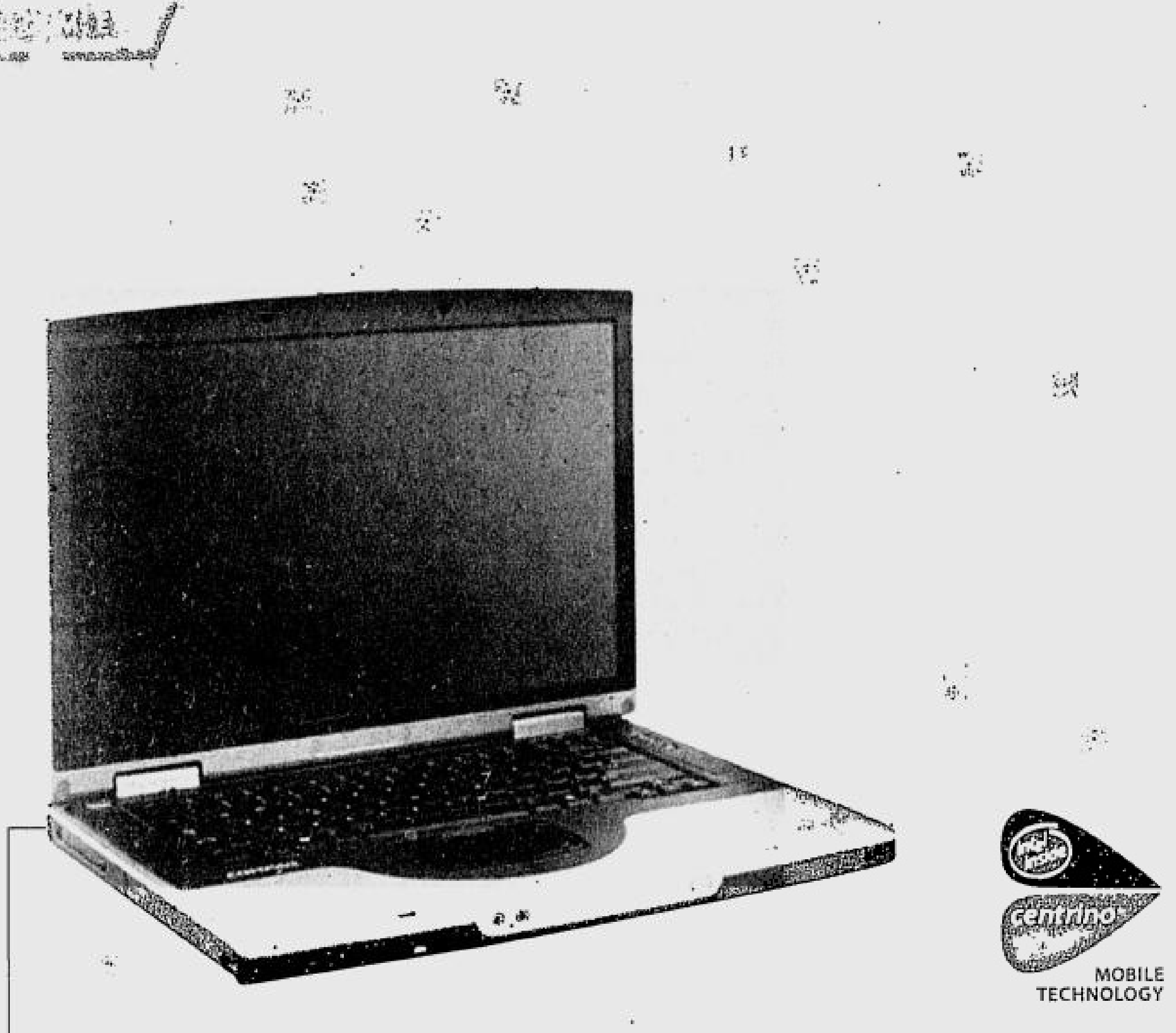

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The miracle that is the Filipino people

DUE to government corruption, coup plots and economic difficulties, many Filipinos have grown disillusioned and cynical about our future. But we should never forget the power of God to make something beautiful out of the wickedness of men and to write straight using the crooked lines of corrupt politicians and military adventurists.

During this time of political despair, let us remember that without the original sin of Adam and Eve, God would not have become Jesus, the Christ of human history. Our Christian Faith tells us that grace is stronger than sin, justice ultimately wins, and God, not Satan, is the Lord of history. We should tell these scheming and mudslinging politicians and their hypocritical conspirators in the military: "Do your worst against our democratic institutions and the rule of the law but you can never defeat God's power and people power."

Let us always be inspired by the kindness and mercy God has blessed the Filipino people with. God's greatness has been repeatedly shown in our history. When Marcos brutalized and plundered our country with his repressive and corrupt dictatorship, God made our country a nation of prophets, martyrs and heroes. And then the miracle of Ninoy Aquino, who believed like Christ that Filipinos are worth dying for, unfolded. The Filipino people who were expected to be silenced by his brutal murder, found their glorious courage in the biggest funeral of world history, in the confetti revolution and in the snap election. And then the miracle of Edsa, God's response to the cries and prayers of the oppressed Filipinos for liberation. Filipinos who were looked down and insulted by foreigners as a nation of cowards for not rising against the conjugal and crony dictatorship faced Marcos' tanks armed only with the spirituality of the cross and patriotism. Filipinos and the whole world should never forget that our people power did not only liberate us from Marcos' tyranny but also inspired other people power phenomena in Eastern Europe, South Africa and Asia. Then came Edsa II.

In the light of our Christian faith and historical experience, we, should thank God almighty for the miracle of Oakwood. Due to the Oakwood mutiny, our government has been empowered to get rid of graft and corruption in the Armed Forces of the Philippines and in government. The secret enemies of democracy and rule of law have been unmasked and weakened. The present political *zarzuelas* of Lacson, Honasan and of the Erap camp are in the last dying breath.

We say to the dirty politicians and coup plotters: "Repent because the judgment of God and our people is at hand."

—PROF. RAUL F. ALEJANDRINO,
Theology Department,
Mission Society of Miriam College,
Quezon City

Adding to the pot of corruption

DO you believe that the Essensa unit that Joey Marquez is using belongs to his sister? Do you think a sister would buy such an expensive condominium so that his brother can use it as a love nest. The monthly dues for the unit amount to P25,000. I do not think anyone in his or her right mind would be so generous as to invest that much money so another person can enjoy the use of the condominium.

A BIR official told me that they are under pressure to increase tax collections because of the budget deficit. I am sick and tired of paying so much taxes because they just go to the pockets of politicians who buy luxurious condominiums, houses and cars.

The more taxes we pay, the more money there is in the pot for the politicians to steal.

—J. FERIOLS,
Project 8, Quezon City

Incredible Kris

SHE has the gall to talk about her jewelry as "*katas ng Hacienda Luisita*"; the audacity to talk about owning, and actually encouraging us all to buy, P13,000-jeans (because they fit really well!). She says of making commercials: "*Wala lang, nagpapayaman lang.*" Unhappy with her body, she has her boobs enhanced and her waist trimmed, and brags about it.

I understand the value of a woman of her stature coming out in the open about a violent relationship. I understand that she may be speaking for the 6 out of 10 women who are battered every day. But let's be clear about something here: Kris was NOT a meek woman in this relationship. She was a powerful woman, hitting back. "*Nagkakasakitan kami,*" not "*Sinasaktan ako,*" an admission that she herself could be violent.

Of course there is absolutely no excuse for any man to hurt a woman physically, but this assumes the women of this world have yet to turn violent on their men and do not and cannot tell lies about domestic violence. In the world beyond feminist and women's liberation theory, in the real world where Kris Aquino and I live, not all women who cry wolf aren't wolves themselves. Tell me how powerless Kris is when she has the sense to burn their bed and grab Marquez's balls.

Please. Let us not paint Aquino as the victim here. It is she who made a victim of Alma Moreno and her kids; of Joshua, of Cory Aquino and Noynoy Aquino. Most of all, she made a victim of us all—her public, who swallowed her truth-telling act, her my-life-is-an-open-book dramatics, and who did not mind that she made a lot of money out of it. She had made us believe all this time that she was *okay sa alright!*—never mind the rules she was breaking.

Please. Let us not make Kris Aquino a woman's hero on the basis of an incident that we haven't heard both sides of. Let us not forget that this woman, whom lawyer Katrina Legarda and Gabriela's Lisa Masa call a hero, sells whitening soap to a land of *morenas*, encourages us all to get breast implants and liposuction, and has already abused another woman by ruining her and her kids' chance at a family—just because Joey Marquez could be the man for her. (A party-list organization has encouraged Kris to file an official complaint against Marquez through their "Report-A-Mistress Campaign"—*e, sinong ire-report ni Kris, sarili niya?*)

In no universe should Kris be considered hero. In no universe is Kris "*api.*" In time, she could rise and wrap us all around her little finger yet again. That is, unless we stop personalities—from Fidel Ramos talking about Marquez's political career to the Fortun brothers rising from Jose Velarde's ashes—from gaining more media mileage from the controversy. Unless we all—including the media—get smarter and wiser about this embarrassing problem that is Kris.

—KATRINA STUART SANTIAGO,
UP Diliman,
Philippine Studies Program

Political opportunism

IT is a very sad commentary when our politicians, particularly those pining for the highest offices of the land, talk so insouciantly about being open to being drafted by rival political parties.

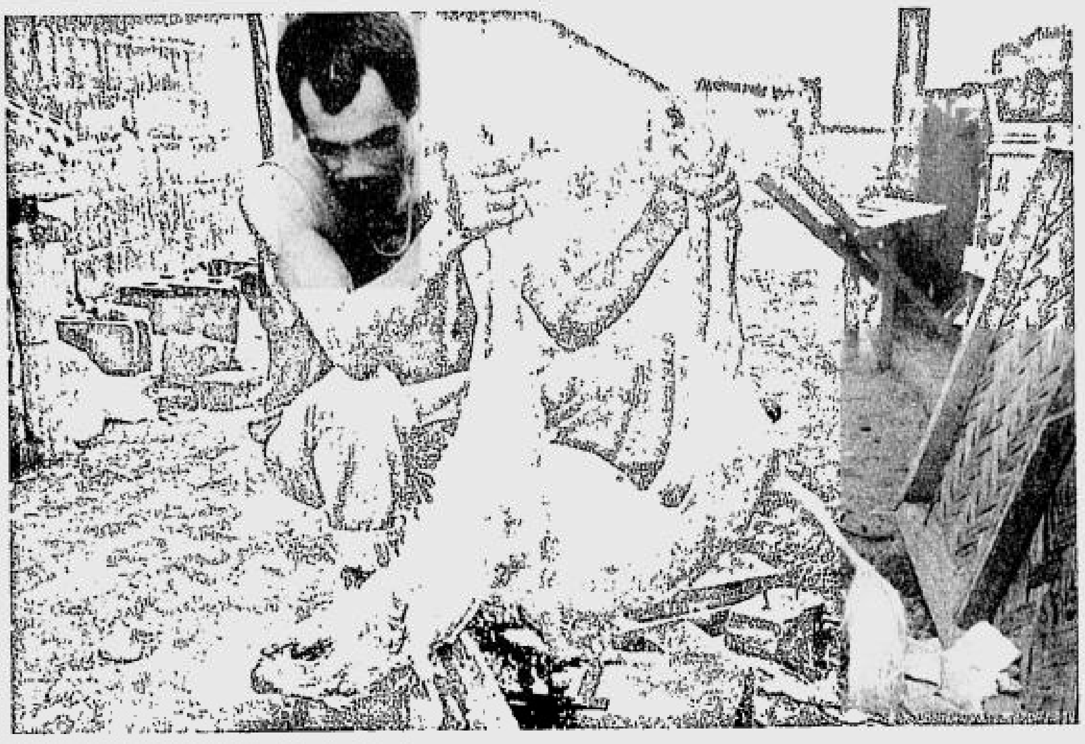
Legarda rhapsodized about being "honored" by the "endorsement from a leading figure of the political opposition" after former Sen. Ernesto Maceda of the Nationalist People's Coalition broached the possibility of a Poe-Legarda or Lacson-Legarda tandem should the LDP and NPC push through with a marriage of convenience.

Serving in a position higher than senator, Legarda said, would be "a challenge and a personal sacrifice… The most important is what position would the people want me to serve, for in the end they are the ones we are mandated to serve."

What the good senator said is not only so egregiously banal but mendacious as well. Her apparent willingness to prostitute herself before political opponents is revealing and symptomatic of how bankrupt and how far down into the muck our political morality has sunk.

It is very disheartening to hear from politicians who casually bruit about coalescing with this and that party, including those led by notorious and devious figures, to enhance their chances in the election; as if political opportunism, contemptible in more civilized societies, is just part of the normal order of things.

—C. M. PAULIN, 1000 W. Main St.,
Freehold, NJ 07728, USA



CRUELTY
A man prepares to butcher a dog in Pampanga despite a ban on the slaughter of dogs for food. The ban is hardly enforced, though, as dog meat continues to be a delicacy in the provinces north of Metro Manila. AFP

NFA bares mixture of good, bad rice

COTABATO CITY—Some rice traders in Cotabato City and Maguindanao have mixed National Food Authority rice with poor quality commercial rice, the NFA office for Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao said.

Prof. Omar Kamid, NFA-ARMM director, said efforts have been made to curb the widespread selling of substandard rice with NFA tag in various retail outlets in the city and the province.

He did not identify who and where these traders operate but Kamid vowed to eradicate the practice.

Saying NFA rice is of high quality, some deceitful rice distributors and retailers mix them with poor and low quality commercial rice at the expense of consumers.

Kitem Kadatuan, Maguindanao provincial manager, said NFA-ARMM had already adopted stringent measures to ensure the agency would only acquire high-grade rice grains under the Guaranteed Rice Quality Program.

Simultaneously, the NFA-ARMM has intensified its campaign to correct people's negative perception of NFA rice as the agency celebrates Grains Industry Week.

Kadatuan said Kamid has formed a team to look into irregularities allegedly committed by NFA-accredited rice retailers.

"We have reports reaching our office about NFA rice mixed with poor quality rice and sold at commercial prices," Kadatuan said, adding that charges would be filed against unscrupulous traders.

A team of NFA personnel had been visiting public markets and rice stores checking on mixed rice to ensure that the buyers are not shortchanged.

Ofelia Sero, NFA assistant regional director, urged the public, especially NFA rice clients, to help them eradicate unscrupulous practices by reporting these to the NFA or police authorities.

Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Cancellation of Bush visit upsets Leyte folk

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—The cancellation of the supposed visit of US President George W. Bush in Leyte has caused disappointment not only among local officials but also members of militant groups in the province.

Leyte Gov. Remedios Petilla said the provincial government was "more than willing" to help in the preparation as well as in providing security to the American president had the visit pushed through.

"It was a sort of a disappointment... We are more than willing to give our share of the expenses ... effort in providing security to President Bush," she said.

For the militant group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) in Tacloban, the visit of President Bush would have given them a more dramatic venue in denouncing what they called the "continued military and economic intervention" of the United States in the country.

Don Dehayco, director of the Bayan commission for popular struggle, said the visit would have been a "perfect time" to show President Bush their opposition against US meddling in the country's affairs.

Still, he added they would push through with a planned rally in Barangay Candahug, Palo town, Leyte, on Oct. 20 to coincide with the 59th Leyte Gulf Landings Anniversary.

Dehayco said they expected that the number of participants in the rally would reach 4,000 from students, women's and peasants' organizations in the different parts of the region.

Bush was expected to arrive on Oct. 18, two days before the annual celebration of the Leyte Gulf Landings, which triggered the country's liberation from Japanese invaders during World War II.

On Oct. 20,1944, American Gen. Douglas Macarthur landed on Red Beach, Barangay Candahug, to fulfill his promise to return and liberate the country, which was then under the control of the Japanese invaders.

Tourism Undersecretary Rolando Reyes earlier said the White House had included the historic Palo town as one of the places the US President would visit while in the country.

Had the visit pushed through, President Bush would have been the first American president or head of state to visit Leyte.

Petilla said the visit was canceled due to time constraints, considering the American president would only be in the country for eight hours.

She said President Bush was originally scheduled to stay overnight in the country and would have had enough time to fly to Leyte.

But the state visit was cut short to eight hours because President Bush would still proceed to Malaysia to attend the Asia Pacific Economic Conference meeting which President Macapagal was also expected to attend.

Several sectors are also urging the Macapagal administration to include in its talks with Bush the possible return of the Balangiga bells to the country.

The bells were taken as war trophies by Americans after the Balangiga massacre.

Vizcaya governor orders probe of pollution from asphalt plant

By Melvin Gascon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Gov. Rodolfo Agbayani has ordered an investigation of the operations of an asphalt batching plant in Barangay Magsaysay here, which have reportedly caused diseases and disturbance among residents.

On Monday, medical teams were sent to examine the reported cases of headache, dizziness and vomiting among children and other residents in Magsaysay, where the plant has been operating since May.

"We will await the outcome of the examinations and if it will be confirmed that the plant has caused the illness of the people there, then I will immediately order its closure," Agbayani told reporters here.

Village council member Joebel Beleno claimed that the plant emits dark, toxic fumes and dust that are often blown and spread into houses and classrooms of a nearby grade school.

"The smoke gets so suffocating that we often have to get out of our houses to breathe fresh air. Sometimes, the smoke gets in during mealtime," Beleno said.

Teachers of Magsaysay Elementary School also complained that the fumes and noise generated by the plant have made it difficult for them to conduct their classes.

"We fear that our pupils are getting traumatized by all these noise and smoke. Their lessons have been greatly affected because every time this plant operates, we have to send them out of their classrooms," said Corazon Marinas, school principal.

The residents assailed the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, for not acting on their complaints.

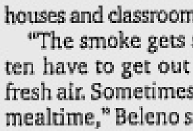
But Ofelia Layugan, EMB chief here, said the air and noise pollution coming from the asphalt plant was "tolerable" based on DENR standards.

"We're also getting confused because every time we conduct an inspection, the operation seems to be okay, but the complainants tell us that once (inspectors) have left, the smoke (emitted by the plant) gets terrible again," Layugan said.

According to her, the plant owners were fined P30,000 last month for operating without an environmental compliance certificate.

"We cannot order its closure at the moment because our findings show that the pollution was tolerable. But once it is proven to be a nuisance for residents, a local government can shut down the plant under the law," she said.

Countdown for Justice



WAPILE

IT is exactly 506 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

1 killed, 5 hurt in ambush

OROQUIETA CITY—Year-old Jovelyn Rasonable is now out of danger after her legs were hit by bullets in an ambush Tuesday afternoon in Concepcion town that claimed the life of her mother and sent four others to hospitals.

Authorities are closely looking into the angle of political rivalry as the motive behind the attack because the target was a cargo vehicle owned by town mayor Roldan Chiong, and victimized a sister of the vice mayor.

Jovelyn was with her mother, Melagrita, along with over 20 other passengers headed for home on board an Isuzu Elf truck on Tuesday afternoon.

As they neared the village center of Upper Potongan, which is an uphill drive, shots were heard from a hill overlooking the dirt road.

According to Ponciano Mabisa, one of the truck passengers, the volley of shots was rapid and the attack was quick that at first, he regarded it as the truck's tires bursting.

Moments later, his wife, Norma, called on him for help saying she was hit by stones. Cobar also had a similar account of the brief attack. *Ryan D. Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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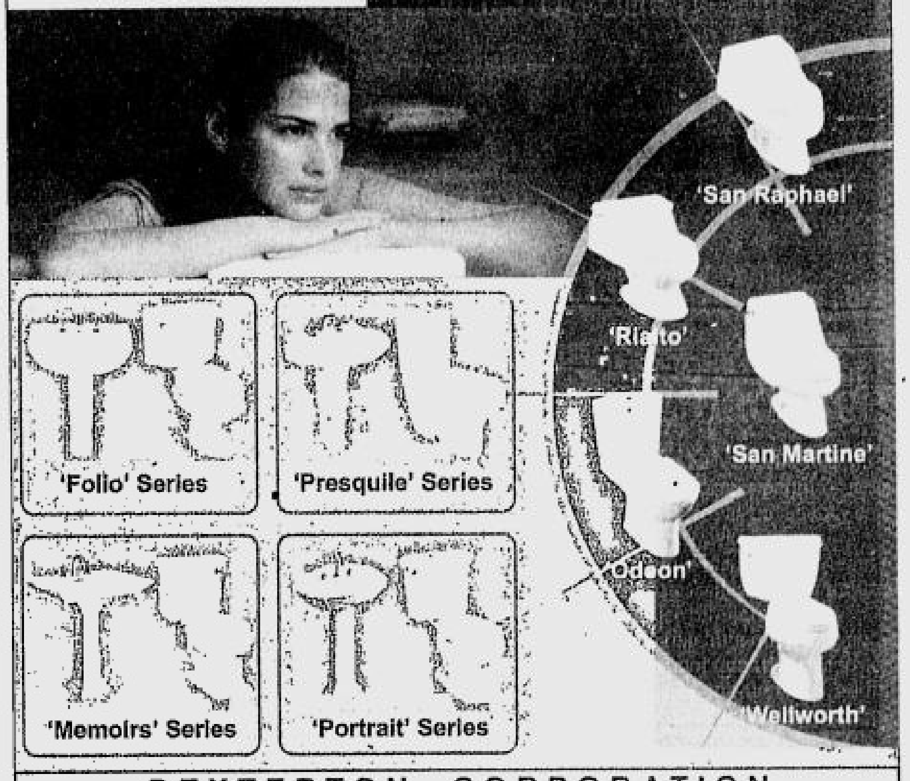

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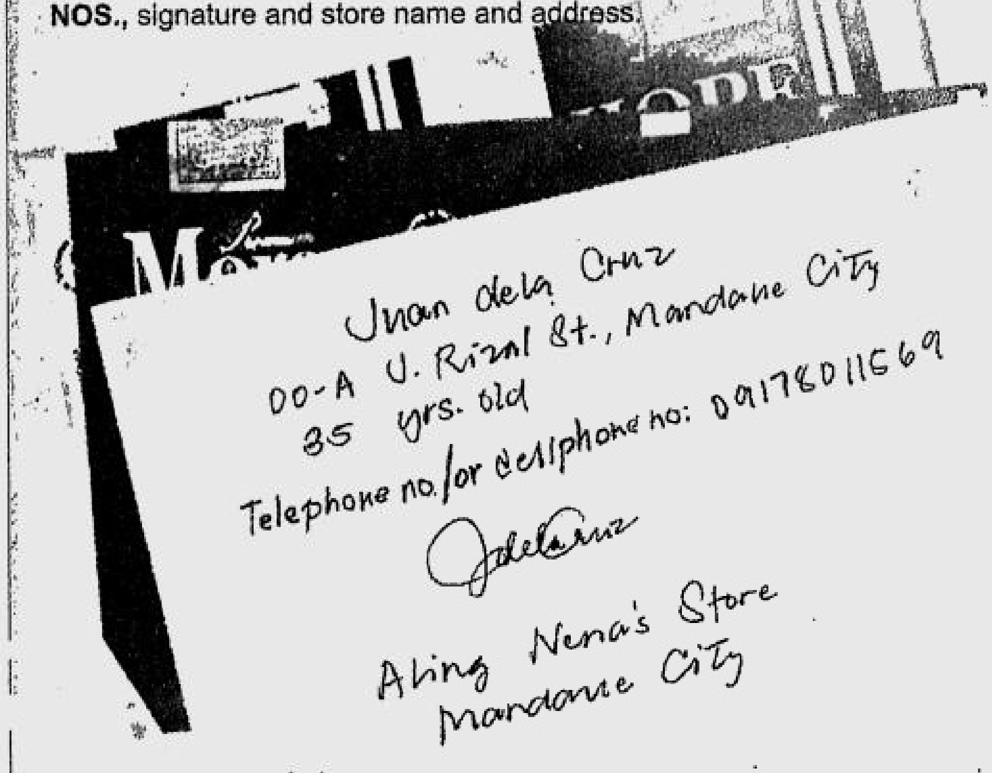

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Lessons of the Cabalantian tragedy

By Tonette Orejas
Bacolor, Pampanga

FOR SOME sentimental reasons, Benjamin Pineda timed the start of the construction of their house three days before the eighth anniversary of the Cabalantian tragedy when lahar, as high as seven meters, buried his village, Barangay Cabalantian, on Oct. 1, 1995.

Pineda, 50, skirted the matter of the timing. At Zone 1, the hardest hit because it was beside the creek where lahar overflowed after bursting the Gugu Dike, he stopped work to say: "*Ang feeling namin masaya kami rito. Siyempre, iba ang lugar mo* (We feel that we are happy here. It's really different if it's your place)."

Pineda and his wife, both employees of the Department of Education, said they borrowed loans from state-owned financing companies to be able to build a house on the same lot buried now under 25 feet of Mt. Pinatubo's lahar.

Like their neighbors, Pineda's son Ryan, 32, is helping out in the construction. Based on the thick plastic thread that Ryan tied on four iron rods, the Pinedas and their neighbors are putting together a six-meter by four-meter room.

> To rescue, to resettle and to rebuild lives became more imperative than counting lahar dead

"*Kung hanggang saan abutin ng pera namin, dun lang* (Wherever our money reaches, it's up to there)," the elder Pineda, a father of five, said of the plan.

Father and son made sure the family's soon-to-be-abode was higher by almost a meter from the ground. They anticipated that the road might reach that same level when the government starts construction next year.

Last year, the government revived the old road traversing Cabalantian, the village where tamales, *suman, mamon, puto seko, ebun buru* and a host of native delicacies are cooked.

Memories of disaster

The Pinedas said the revival of that road, which is definitely a lifeline, makes their return to the village an urgent possibility.

To Ryan, however, the return, albeit for the construction work, refreshes memories of the disaster.

On Oct. 1, 1995, a Sunday, lahar triggered by rains of typhoon "Mameng" snaked through the village without any adequate warning.

It helped that the *magtatamale* woke early to cook to notice the rising water and the sound of horse-like stampede of lahar, Ryan said.

By 4 a.m., Ryan, then 19, remembered the water reaching almost four feet high. From the rooftop, Ryan, his brother and an aunt dangled themselves from the cables of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and the San Fernando Electric Corp. to reach the next house's second floor.

"We could not walk on soft, hot lahar," he recalled.

When lahar, this time, rose fast and higher, they did the same stunt all over again to reach the fourth floor of Mar Santiago's grocery, the highest building at that time, he said. Only the roof of that building now remains, a mute monument to that race for life.

According to Ryan, more than 2,000 residents huddled tightly for three nights and four days without water and food. Shivering under intermittent rains, all they did in that state of isolation was "pray, pray and hope help would come," he said.

Zero visibility stopped helicopter-borne rescue workers from plucking those marooned on roofs, according to Councilor Nilo Caballa.

Several men braved to try walking amid lahar on the third day when rains ceased and Ryan believed many survived.

Seven years after the disaster, there is still no official count as to how many residents were buried alive. But in Zone 1 alone, at least 58 were confirmed dead, Caballa said.

Rebuilding lives

To rescue, to evacuate people, to resettle them and to rebuild lives became more imperative than counting the dead, he reckoned.

But those who died from the tragedy, according to him, are always remembered. Families returned every Oct. 1 to light candles in areas where they believed their loved ones perished. That makes the All Souls' Day rites in the village observed twice yearly.

Juan David, now 73, had never left the village. He survived by clinging hard onto a *duhat* tree. He survived by earning money from the charcoal and charred tree trunks that lahar left in its path of destruction.

He said that in all those years, the Gugu Creek, which lahar and desilting work had widened into a river, teemed with fish on many months.

It is not only out of a sense of attachment that he opted to stay put. It is largely out of the value for self-reliance.

"Why should I go to the evacuation center and the resettlement when life there is very difficult. There are no jobs there and I don't want to be living on other people's mercy," he said. His wife Leonila, 70, joined him a week after surviving the onslaught of lahar.

Martin Regala and his wife Emerenciana, both in their early 70s, had settled back here last year. They have decided to remain when the first harvest yielded a good supply of vegetables.

There is still fear. The Regalas maintain a ladder leading up to the roof in case lahar crawls again.

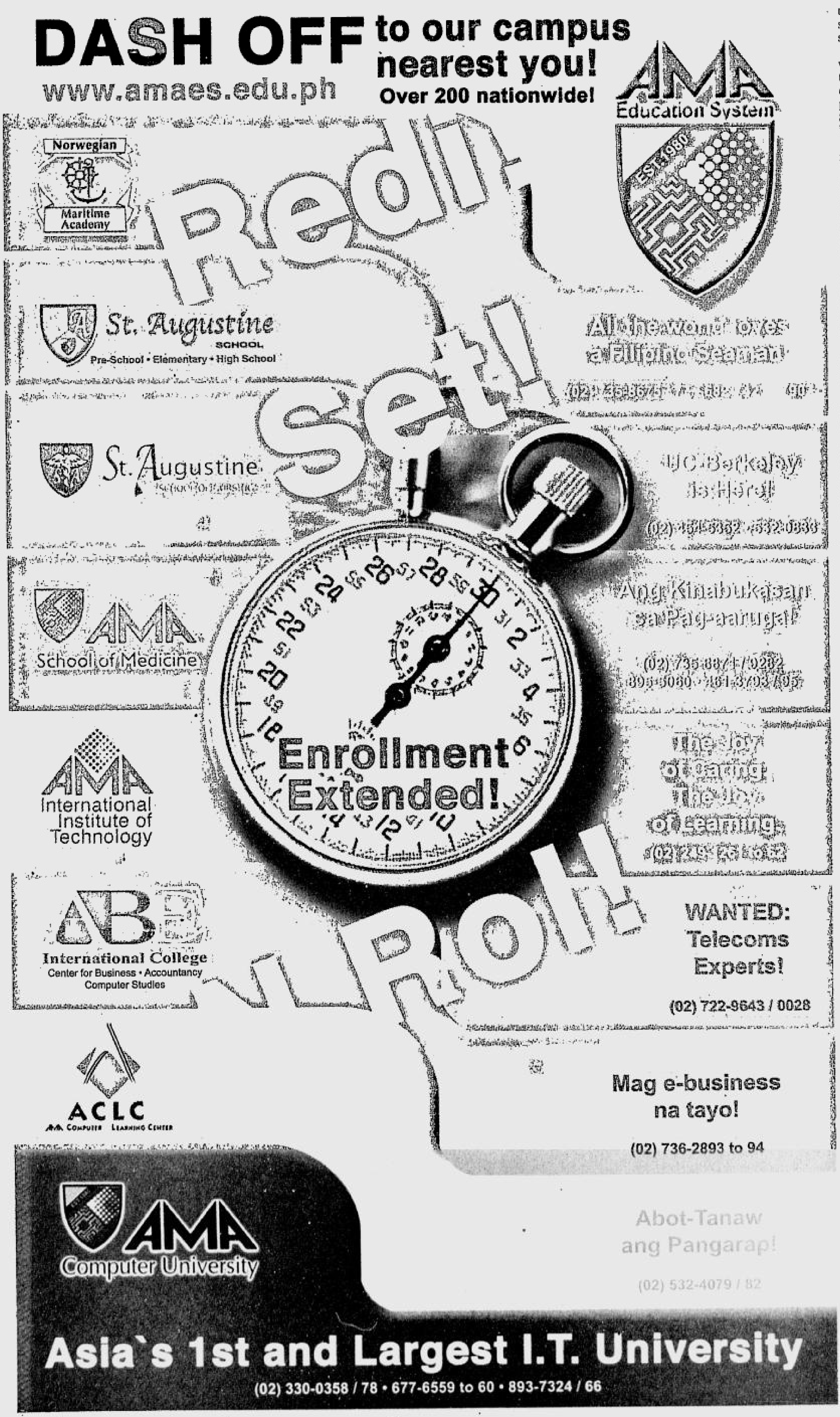
"It's better here because we can plant, putter around the house, take long walks which make us strong. In Bulaon (resettlement), the house is too small for our big family and there's not much plot to plant. You'll get weak there," Emerenciana said.

While four other zones are thickly populated now following the construction of the road from San Juan, Macabacle, and onwards to the eastern part of Cabalantian, Juan David said it was only in the last two years that more families had returned on a permanent basis. About 2,000 families had returned.

"*Ing Cabalantian emi pa bira uling mabye ke pa* (Cabalantian has not been erased from the map because we are still alive)," said Rody David. His house is built on concrete, a gamble he took because, he said, he wants his entire family back here.

While the number of the dead remained unknown and the safety of Cabalantian seemed still uncertain, Caballa said the tragedy left a lesson for all to keep to mind.

"We learned that we could not be complacent. We may have a dike here but that isn't a full assurance of safety. We have learned to be aware, to take precautions. We remained vigilant against lahar," he said.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Does Baguio gov't still need tossed salad fest?

DOES the Baguio City government still have a taste for the world's biggest tossed salad?

The local government's treatment this year of the city's annual Tossed Salad Festival has convinced many businessmen that they are no longer welcome.

Members of the Baguio Association of Hotels and Restaurants (Bahai) admitted in a press conference on Thursday that the third staging of the event had been pushed out of Baguio's Charter Day anniversary month lineup, despite its previous success as a crowd drawer during the off-peak tourist months.

The third serving of the much-touted largest tossed salad has been rescheduled on Oct. 11. It will be held in an open-air venue at the Athletic Bowl of Burnham Park, after the city government cancelled Bahai's reservation for the Baguio Convention Center.

In its place, Mayor Bernardo Vergara had booked a 15-day book fair at the convention center, which was organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the INQUIRER was told.

Jeannine Chan, Bahai president and manager of the Mountain Lodge, said the schedule mix-up was forgivable.

But some Bahai members claimed that some city officials had resented the Bahai activity because it competed with the city government for valuable corporate sponsorships.

"It came to a point (in 2002) when they were urging us to drop a corporate sponsor in exchange for permits to allow the salad festival to proceed," a source said.

Vergara is in Hawaii and could not be reached for comment. City officials last week said they had not been involved in the deliberations that resulted in the displacement of the Bahai project from the charter month events.

Record-breaking

Michael del Rosario, owner of the Hotel Veniz and president of the Baguio Association of Restaurants (BAR), said the Tossed Salad Festival should be credited for launching record-breaking activities now being used by various local governments to promote their areas.

The first festival on Sept. 16, 2001 started its own record for tossing the largest Caesar's salad in the world, which served more than 5,000 people.

Chan said the event broke the record for the largest serving of tossed salad that was made in Utah.

Del Rosario said Baguio's largest salad convinced many local governments to try entering their own world records "so we had the biggest carrot cake (from La Trinidad, Benguet)... and even the biggest shoe (Marikina City)."

The second festival beat Bahai's own record when it managed to serve more than 12,800 people.

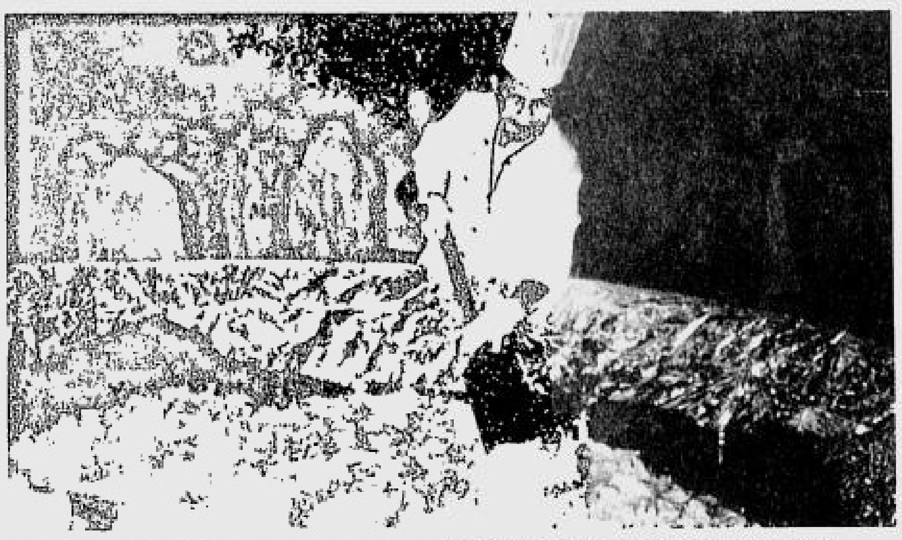
The city had originally scheduled the festival on Sept. 29. "We were already scheduled for the third week of September, because we had expanded the affair to include a parade, a trade exhibit and a cooking festival. But the city government asked us to move it to suit other Charter Day events. We agreed. Then they asked us to move it again to the last week of September because Vergara would be unavailable for our launching," the source said.

The weeklong festival will open on Oct. 4 with a vegetable parade on Session Road. Baguio's best products will go on display at the Malcolm Square on the same day, while a series of competitions are scheduled for the rest of the week, including an indigenous cooking contest on Oct. 9 and a root crop sculpting competition on Oct. 11.

Chan acknowledged that the city government had not offered Bahai any apology for the schedule mix-up, although she stressed that the business community bore no ill will for the city government.

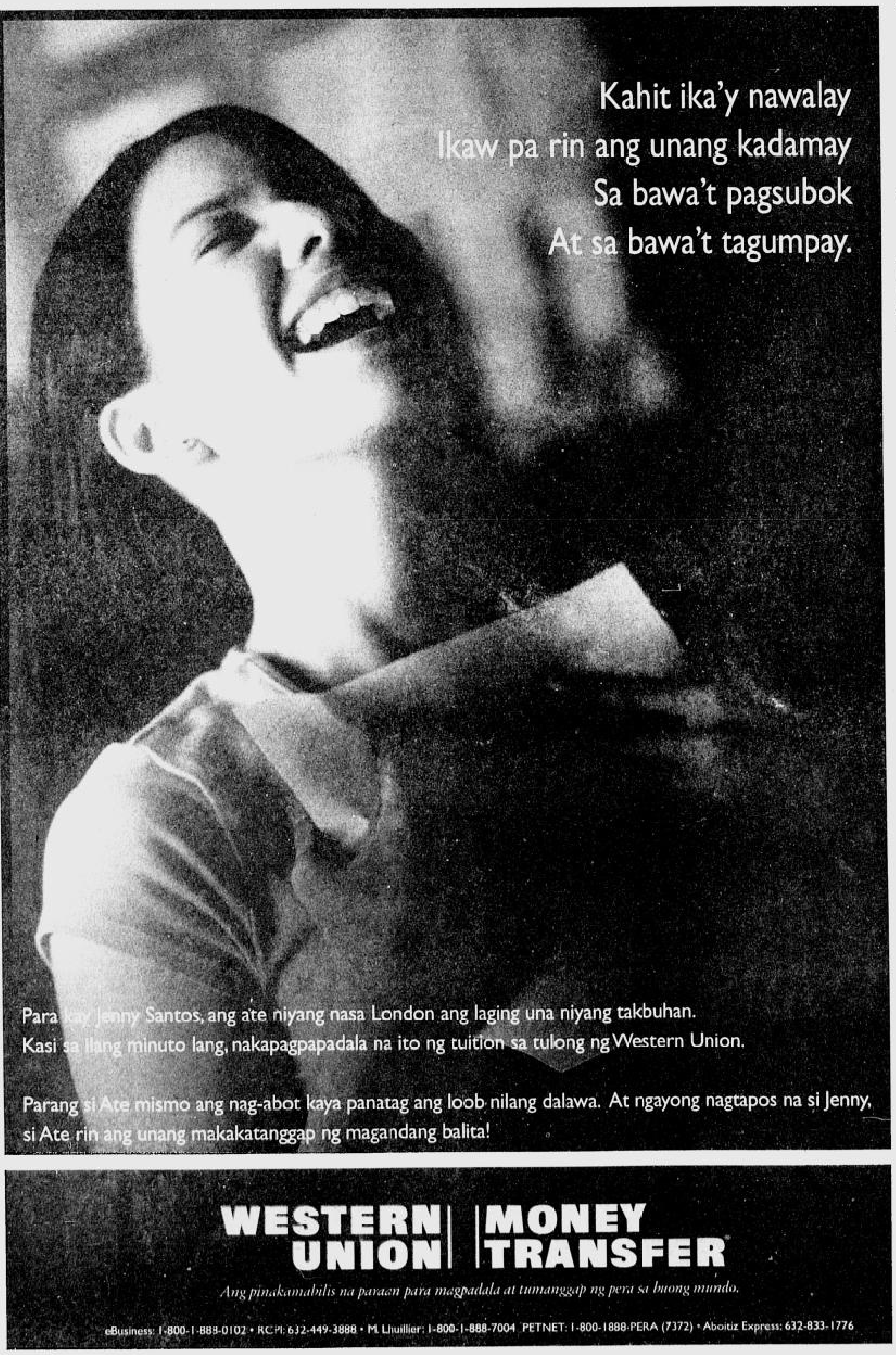
She said the third salad festival is no longer aiming to break any records. This year's largest tossed salad will offer instead new salad dressing choices, she said.

Vincent Cabreza



ORGANIZERS of the Third Baguio Tossed Salad Festival on Oct. 11 hope to surpass the 12,000 tourists and residents who lined up last year to taste the country's largest tossed salad.

TOOTS SOBERANO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In Hawaii, only about 100 Filipinos bothered to register

WITH a registration deadline of Tuesday, only about 100 Filipinos living in Hawaii have taken advantage of a law that would allow them to vote in the Philippine national elections in May, officials said.

Officials estimate there are about 50,000 Philippine nationals among Hawaii's population of about 1.2 million people.

Rolando Gregorio, Philippine consul general in Honolulu, said he didn't expect the number to increase because of a provision in the absentee voting law that requires registrants to return to the Philippines within three years of the election.

Those who do not return to the Philippines will be taken off the registration list and will not be able to vote in the next election.

Another law that grants Filipinos living abroad dual citizenship—and the ability to vote in elections with no requirement to return—went into effect on Sept. 17, but Gregorio said rules hadn't been written yet, so elections officials would abide by the current requirements.

The absentee registration began on Aug. 1.

Filipino immigrants living abroad who are 18 or older are eligible to vote for president, vice president, Senate and some House seats, as long as they have not given up their Philippine citizenship.

In Canada, election officials illegally charged some Filipinos $40 to $50 before they could register, according to presidential aspirant Raul Roco.

Roco said Filipinos in Canada complained about the fee when he spoke to them last week.

"When you charge them $40 to $50 just to register, that is putting a property qualification to voting. That is wrong. That's prohibited by the Constitution," he told reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday.

He said Filipinos in Canada were told that the fee was for the "affidavit and notarial expenses."

Roco insisted that voters' registration should be free. He visited Filipino communities in Vancouver and Toronto in Canada and Chicago, Illinois in the US. *AP and Dona Pazzibugan*

4% turnout in overseas voter registration

From page A1

tives abroad to clearly explain the rules.

He said many Filipinos abroad did not register because they believed they would be obliged to come home permanently. "Nobody explained to them that they must only visit home, that they (just profess) a desire to come home (after some years)," Roco, a presidential aspirant, said.

The Overseas Absentee Voting Act allows qualified Filipino citizens abroad to vote for president, vice president, senators and party-list representatives in May and subsequent elections, except in plebiscites and referendums.

The law, however, requires them to execute an affidavit pledging to return to the Philippines and to permanently reside in the country within three years from the time of registration.

Heherson Alvarez, presidential adviser on Overseas Filipino Communities, said the overseas registration "should not be considered a failure" because the 300,000-strong registrants could constitute a "decisive factor" in the May elections.

Alvarez, who campaigned for two weeks in the United States and Europe where registration was low, said the registrants should be considered intelligent voters.

"They are mostly college graduates, some holding blue-collar jobs. Whether domestic helpers in Hong Kong, helpers in Japan or caregivers in the United States or Canada, they hold college degrees or have at least college-level education," Alvarez said in a statement.

For his part, Comelec information chief Diego Cagahastian said the registration was a success. "This is a success... for an effective base of 900,000, we were able to register about 300,000," he said.

The original Comelec target for overseas voters was 2.5 million. It was lowered to 1.7 million, then 800,000 before going down to a "low" of 200,000 to a "high" of 400,000.

The Overseas Absentee Voting Secretariat said 301,503 overseas Filipinos had registered as of 5 p.m. yesterday, but the figure continued to grow by the minute because some embassies and consulates had yet to close the registration due to time difference between Manila and the 85 registration centers worldwide.

There were 141,414 registrants in the Asia Pacific region, 124,862 in the Middle East and Africa, 24,851 in Europe and 10,376 in the United States, South America and Canada.

A total of 85,576 Filipinos have registered in Hong Kong, topping all others in terms of turnout.

Catherine Maceda, head of the secretariat, said the total number of registrants would be known probably on Oct. 4 when the reports from all the registration posts worldwide shall have come in. The secretariat is projecting a final turnout of between 350,000 to 400,000.

She said the registration figure was "relatively good" for the first year of the implementation of the Overseas Absentee Voting Law. "It was well worth the effort," she said.

The DFA had earlier projected the number of potential registrants at 1.7 million.

Filipinos overseas trooped to the embassies and consulates in growing numbers as the deadline approached due to the "last minute syndrome," Maceda said.

She noted that from an average of 2,118 registrants per day in the first 10 days of the registration period, the daily average jumped to 7,123 in Sept. 11-28.

Maceda said as many as 9,000 registrants turned up at the Philippine consulate in Hong Kong on Sunday. There was also an increase in the turnout in Riyadh, Jeddah and Al-Khobar in Saudi Arabia.

Bishops to GMA: Tell us your plans

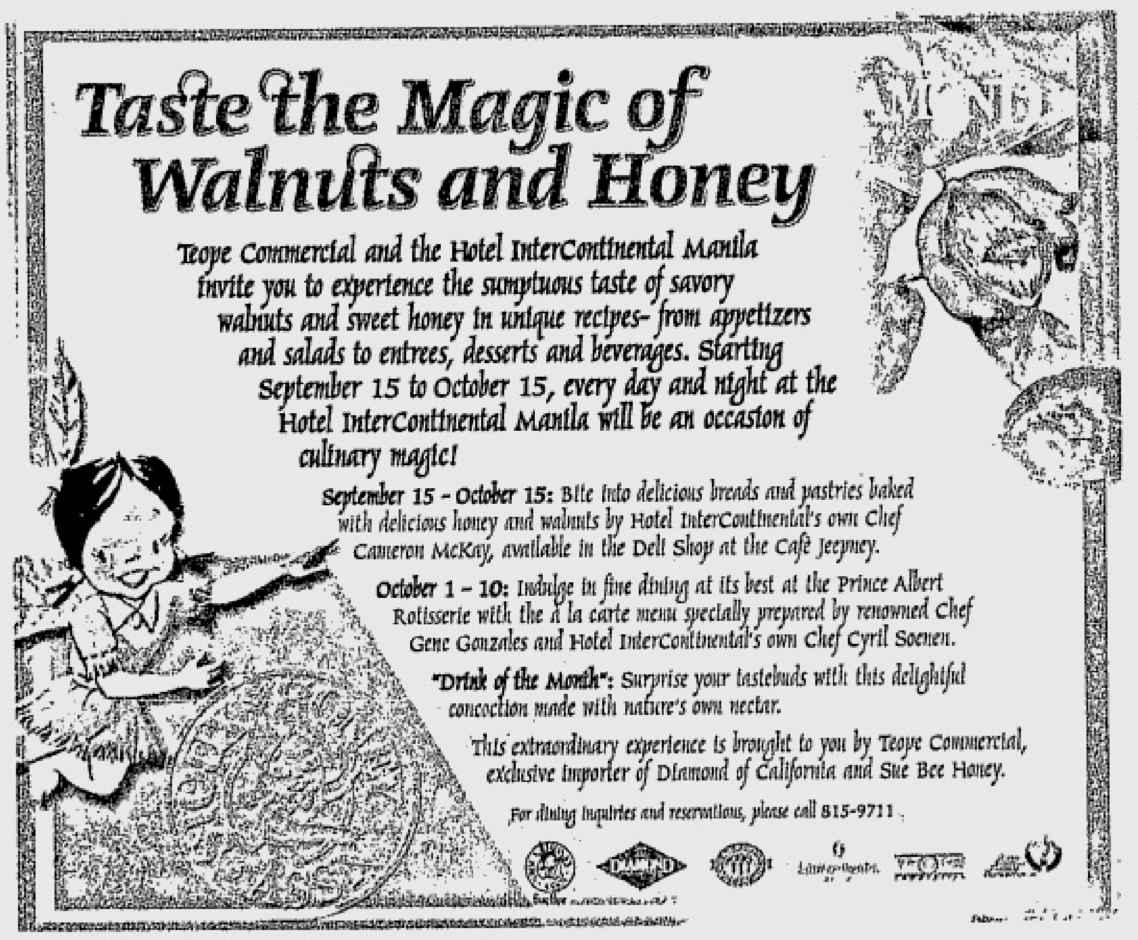
CATHOLIC bishops in the Philippines are seeking a meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo to ascertain whether she would stand in next year's presidential polls, a spokesperson said yesterday.

Msgr. Hernando Coronel, speaking for the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, said the bishops had requested a meeting with Ms Macapagal next week to ask if she is still maintaining her stand that she will not contest the presidency.

"She has said last December that she would not run but there are indications that she might run so religious leaders want some explanations and in our meeting with (Arroyo), we want some clarity," Coronel said.

He said that national security adviser Sec. Roilo Golez was arranging the meeting, as part of an ecumenical consultative group which will include Protestant and Muslim religious leaders.

Coronel did not say why Golez was arranging the meeting. *AFP*



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Roco seeks Visayan for veep

PRESIDENTIAL contender Raul Roco wants a Visayan for a running mate.

He said yesterday he was choosing among five "Visayans or Visayan mestizos"—namely senators Franklin Drilon, Loren Legarda and Manuel Villar, Trade Secretary Mar Roxas, and former Cebu Gov. and presidential candidate Lito Osmeña.

"For me, the best running mate is someone from the Visayas or is a Visayan mestizo," Roco told reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

But he added that he was also considering a couple of "Tagalogs," namely Senators Noli De Castro and Ramon Magsaysay Jr.

The former senator and education secretary hails from Bicol.

Roco returned yesterday from a week-long trip to the United States and Canada, where he met with Filipino communities there.

He promised to name his running mate in November. *Dona Pazzibugan*

Third Force batting for Danding

From page A1

LDP, especially Lacson's chances.

Already, Padilla said, some Lakas stalwarts who were thinking of their political future have started negotiations with other parties for a possible coalition.

"This is a very (problematic) situation as far as the administration people are concerned," he said. "The Lakas can't choose a candidate outside President Macapagal-Arroyo because she might run."

Padilla earlier predicted the collapse of Lakas by the end of the year.

He said it would be too late for Ms Macapagal to reunite her party since she herself was causing its division.

In the case of the NPC, Padilla said the LDP had nothing to lose if NPC continued coalescing with Lakas.

He said that while NPC was part of the administration coalition at present, a possible coalition with the LDP minus Lakas would be a welcome development for LDP.

Padilla also expressed confidence that Angara, LDP president, would also support Lacson if Cojuangco decides not to run for president.

Lakas may not have a presidential candidate yet, but the party is making sure its provincial candidates are squarely behind her.

A party member in Baguio City said party officials had started reuniting local members, who ran against each other during the 2001 elections.

At the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, where he is detained on plunder charges, deposed President Joseph Estrada downplayed a possible split in the opposition despite the verbal exchanges between Lacson and leaders of the NPC.

According to him, the verbal tussle is but part of the normal "process" in the selection of a common candidate within a political bloc. He said he was optimistic that, in the end, the opposition will be able to unite behind a common candidate.

The opposition's preparatory committee for the unification of the opposition (PCUO) is now deep in negotiations to get all opposition parties to agree on a common candidate. The choice has been narrowed down to Lacson, Cojuangco and action star Fernando Poe Jr.

Taking a dig once more at the President's declaration to let divine intervention guide her in her decision about running in 2004, Estrada said the opposition's strong contenders could very well carry the day for them.

"At least we are sure of at least three candidates. No need for divine intervention," he said, laughing.

Paras was categorical in his support for Cojuangco, the Marcos crony and SMC chair. "Where Danding wants to take us, we will go."

Paras said he and Cojuangco talked on Saturday in Bacolod, when the businessman supposedly told him if he would not run, Cojuangco would endorse Poe.

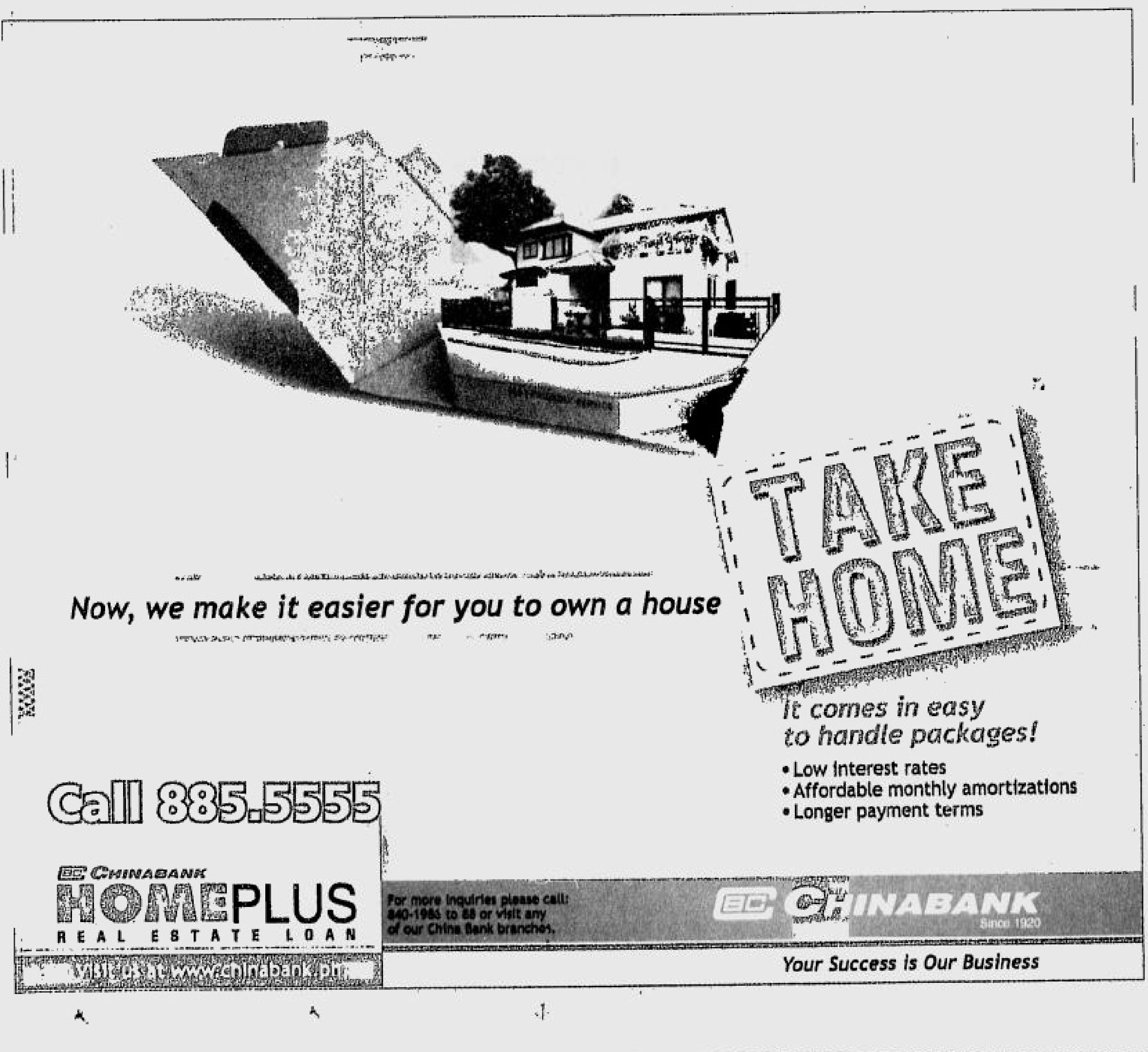
"It's either one of the two (Cojuangco or Poe) as our candidate in this coalition," Paras said. "That's what he (Cojuangco) told me in Bacolod last Saturday."

Paras declared the Oct.7 Lakas leaders' meeting—when Ms Macapagal is expected to be nominated as the ruling party's candidate—as non-bearing.

"Danding does not depend on GMA," Paras said. "It has come to a point that we recognize Danding as our leader."

He said he continued to hope, however, that should President Macapagal decide not to run, the mainstream Lakas would choose Cojuangco.

Paras recalled that even Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. had acknowledged that Cojuangco was a "popular choice" among Lakas leaders. ***With reports from Cynthia Balana, Dona Passibugan, Armand Nocum; Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***



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The Philippine Development Innovation Marketplace 2004 competition, *Panibagong Paraan,* invites concept papers responding to the theme ***"MAKING SERVICES WORK FOR THE POOR."***

Project entries should fall under any of the following sectoral areas identified in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP): *Health • Education • Conservation • Environment • Water and Sanitation • Infrastructure • Energy • Housing • Agriculture and Agrarian Reform • Good Governance • Information and Communication Technology • Social Protection*

Winning proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria: Innovativeness • Partnership • Sustainability • Replicability • Impact • Cost-effectiveness

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PROPONENT DETAILS

Organization / Institution
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- *Affiliation(s) with any coalition or network, if any*
- *Contact details: Address, Phone / FAX No., E-mail*

Primary Partner Organization(s)/ Institution(s):
- *Contact Person*
- *Contact details: Address, Phone / FAX No., E-mail*

Project Details
- *Title of the Project*
- *Project Implementation Site(s)*
- *Project Duration*
- *Projected Total Project Costs*
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- *Projected Funding Counterpart*

PROJECT QUESTIONS

1. What is the problem / issue your project is addressing?
2. What is your idea, and how does it address the problem(s) / issue(s) described above in terms of making services work for the poor?
3. Describe the activities / steps your project will undertake to achieve its objectives.
4. How is your idea innovative or different from existing approaches that are addressing the problem(s) / issue(s) you have described above?
5. How will your project contribute towards building or strengthening partnerships?
6. What are the expected results of your project? Whom will they benefit? How will they be measured?
7. How will your project be sustained even after the DIM funding?
8. How can your project be replicated in areas with similar conditions?

Concept papers must be submitted with one or two reference documents (e.g. SEC registration) establishing proof of the organization's legal personality. All entries must comply with all requirements for eligibility and format; non-compliant entries will be automatically rejected. A multi-sectoral technical working group will evaluate eligible concept papers.

Concept papers in either **English or Filipino** can be sent by **mail, hand delivered, faxed, or e-mailed** to:

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Now, Congress wants automated elections scrapped

By Carlito Pablo

THE JOINT Congressional Oversight Committee on the Automation of Elections is recommending the suspension of automated elections in the 2004 polls.

The oversight committee made the recommendation due to the lack of automated counting machines procured by the Commission on Elections that would ensure a more efficient tallying of votes.

"With only 1,991 counting machines for some 38 million voters in 1,600 cities and municipalities, 42,000 barangays and 250,000 precincts, it is clear that a nationwide implementation is doomed to fail and will be counter-productive," Rep Jesli Lapus (NPC, Tarlac) said.

Lapus is the chair of the House panel in the oversight committee, with Sen. Edgardo Angara serving as his counterpart.

Lapus noted that Angara shared the view that because of the limited number of counting machines, the counting could not be done at the precinct level but only in municipal and city centers.

The congressional oversight committee is recommending that the 1,991 counting machines be used only in "select priority areas."

Lapus identified these areas as Metro Manila and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

"The physical transport of uncounted ballots from the polling places in the barangays to the counting centers is considered dangerous to clean and honest elections," Lapus said.

Aside from the lack of machines, there were related problems like machine breakdowns, improper operation, power failures and even sabotage, according to Lapus.

Lapus cited tests conducted by the Department of Science and Techonology on the first batch of 30 counting machines, wherein nine units were found defective.

"Considering the uncertainties involved in this initial implementation of both expanded automation and overseas absentee voting next year, it is best to be conservative and realistic," he said.

GMA still keeping mum on her plans

From page A1

call for politicians to set aside partisan politics and raise debate to the level of policies and platforms.

Ms Macapagal arrived at 10:10 a.m. yesterday via a Philippine Airlines flight from Paris.

She said her trip to New York, Rome and Paris consolidated strong international support for the peace and development process in Mindanao and showed that the international community's confidence in the country's political stability and its economic prospects was growing.

"I would like to report to you the nation that I had a very productive trip," Ms Macapagal said in remarks on her return. "Together with my delegation, we brought the cause of peace, security and development to important venues and events."

She made special mention of her audience with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.

"My meeting with the Holy Father in Rome renews and strengthens my resolve to wage the peace and to help the poor in the Philippines, uplift them and empower them," she said.

"Things are falling into place," she added, saying that peace in Mindanao was within grasp, now that a multi-donor trust fund is being set up by the World Bank, the United States Assistance for International Development, and Muslim countries.

The "commitments" come from Islamic aid agencies, the governments of Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait as well as other members of oil exporting countries.

"We will push the envelope on this effort as we unleash massive public resources and ODA (official development assistance) for infrastructure, socio-economic programs and autonomous capacity building in Mindanao," the President said.

President Macapagal is given military honors upon arrival at the Naia from a three-nation five-day tour. With the President is Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya.

PCPO MALACAÑANG)

Political season

Ms Macapagal said she would "continue to weave the right tapestry of foreign and domestic policies that will best serve our nation and people."

But politics, she said, was getting in the way of her plans for the nation.

"The political season seems to be in full tilt, unfortunately, and I hope it's not getting too much in the way of thinking straight about our priorities," she said, to an audience of government officials led by Vice President Teofisto Guingona whom she had named government caretaker in her absence.

Ms Macapagal said everybody should participate in the shaping of a good policy, whether as a proponent or a fiscalizer.

"I call on all quarters to transform the partisan flavor of current debates into something more constructive," she said.

Ms Macapagal thanked Guingona for "taking care of the government while I was gone."

The President frustrated those, like party-mate Guingona, who expected her to announce her election plans for May 2004.

Before her departure last week, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said Ms Macapagal was praying very hard and seeking divine guidance for her decision.

Estrada's forecast

The ruling party Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats are set to endorse her during the meeting of the national directorate on Oct. 7.

But according to deposed President Joseph Estrada, Ms Macapagal's political future now looks dark—as in blackout dark.

Estrada, speaking in his Veterans Medical Memorial Center detention suite, said the blackout that struck almost all of Italy during Ms Macapagal's visit to the Vatican on Sunday was ominous.

"This is a bad sign," Estrada said, apparently without irony. The former actor, now on trial for plunder, is famous for his fear of the number 13 and his reliance on Chinese feng shui experts for his decisions.

"She should read the sign on the wall. This is the first time in the history of Rome that there (was) a blackout this big," Estrada said of the power outage.

He said Ms Macapagal should take the blackout as a sign for her to step down from power or to stick to her plans not to run in the 2004 presidential elections.

Cabinet meeting

Ms Macapagal went straight to a Cabinet meeting to discuss the "domestic measures necessary to exploit the opportunities we have gained" from her trip.

The opportunities, she said, were the rapidly consolidating international support for peace and development in Mindanao, the global consensus against terrorism and transnational crime, the growing confidence in political stability and economy, and the surge in dynamism within the global community of Filipinos as a result of more jobs, remittances and greater political empowerment.

In her arrival remarks, the President said that domestic security would be bolstered with the imminent election of the Philippines to a seat at the United Nations Security Council.

"There, I intend to push the principles of collective security, multilateral approach and the rule of law," said Ms Macapagal, who addressed the UN General Assembly in New York.

She also said the Philippines was ready to join the UN law enforcement and humanitarian teams in Liberia.

"Our involvement in global peace making is just as important as our participation in the global coalition against terrorism. The restoration of strong democratic institutions is indispensable to our bid to marginalize and defeat terror everywhere," she said.

The President also noted that overseas workers' remittances in the first half of the year overtook last year's level. The country is having a boom in the deployment of caregivers, teachers and medical personnel, she said, and these workers send more resources back while the government gave them broader political and welfare rights.

"Filipinos are the best citizens of the world. We're a global enterprise and proud of it," she said.

The President deplaned alone, as the embattled First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo stayed behind to reportedly look into the plight of some overseas workers in the Middle East. *With reports from Armand Nocum; AFP*

Military lifts red alert status

By TJ Burgonio

THE MILITARY downgraded its alert status from red to white at six last night, hours after the President returned from a five-day working visit to the United States, France and Italy.

But military officials did not rule out the possibility that they might upgrade the alert anew, in time for US President George W. Bush's brief visit to the country on Oct. 18.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, military information officer, said that the Armed Forces no longer saw the need to maintain red alert status, which was enforced on Monday last week, two days before the President's departure.

"The action of the AFP will speak for itself. There is no more need to maintain the red alert status since the situation already warrants that we downgrade the alert level status," he told reporters. "It looks like we are experiencing a relatively normal situation."

The military had expected militant groups to stage protest rallies in Metro Manila while Ms Arroyo was abroad, but this did not happen.

"There was no conduct of any rally but the score here is that at least we prepared to conduct civil disturbance management operations in case these militant groups conduct rallies in any part of Metro Manila," Lucero said.

Lucero said that the military might raise the alert status anew in view of Mr. Bush's visit. "In case the situation warrants, then we will upgrade the alert status," he said.

The AFP, he said, would "not let its guard down" despite the New People's Army's denial of earlier reports that it was plotting to assassinate Bush when he sets foot in the country.

"We will maintain our high level of alertness and concern to see to it that the US President will be safe and secure once he visits the Philippines," Lucero said.

Local authorities, headed by the Presidential Security Group, are in the thick of elaborate security preparations for Bush's visit in coordination with the US Secret Service.

PSG personnel tapped to provide security for the US President "are presently undergoing training to hone their skills in VIP security and our intelligence units are also tasked to monitor the security situation in areas where the US President will be visiting," he said.

Spiritual, financial support pouring in for peace in South

From page A1

vestments," the President said.

"We will continue to push the envelope on this effort as we unleash massive public resources and Official Development Assistance for infrastructure, socio-economic programs and autonomous capacity building in Mindanao," she said.

Kuala Lumpur

Ms Macapagal said Malaysia would continue to facilitate the peace negotiations which are set to resume next month in Kuala Lumpur. The President met with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad in New York.

The President said she pushed for peace, security and development in her trip to New York, Rome and Paris, which she described as very productive.

She said the United States Institute for Peace, a nongovernment organization interested in the peace talks, would lobby Washington for concrete support for resolution of the conflict.

Last week, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan told Ms Macapagal at the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York that he was willing to help in the peace process.

The possible involvement of Annan in the peace process has raised hopes that a final peace agreement with the government is in the offing, according to MILF chair Ebrahim Murad.

Lasting political solution

In a statement dated Sept. 29, Murad said the involvement of the United Nations could lead to the "attainment of a just, lasting and comprehensive political solution to the armed conflict and the Bangsamoro problem."

Murad, who recently took over the MILF leadership after the death of Salamat Hashim in July, said the resolution of the decades-old conflict now depended on government's sincerity.

"We have adopted a moderate policy with regard to the political aspects of our struggle to prove our sincerity in finding a political solution to the problem," he said.

Teresita Deles, newly appointed presidential adviser on the peace process, said the success of the peace process hinged on the support of the people of Mindanao.

"The peace process should be supported by Mindanao people to make it sustainable and durable. I ask the people to support it because we know what will happen in Mindanao (without an agreement). Everybody is affected," said Deles, who replaced Eduardo Ermita as adviser on the peace process. Ermita is the new defense secretary.

Like Murad, Deles said she was optimistic that peace would soon be achieved in Mindanao. "I can see clearly now the light at the end of the tunnel," she said.

Deles said the arrival next month of a monitoring team from the OIC was expected to hasten the resumption of the formal peace talks with the MILF in Kuala Lumpur.

In preparation for the negotiations, the MILF reopened the office of its peace negotiators in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, on Saturday.

The office was shut down following Ms Macapagal's punitive actions against the MILF in April.

Benjie Midtimbang, head of the MILF Coordinating Committee on Cessation of Hostilities, said the reactivation of the office would help improve "the system of communication and coordination for the effective implementation and monitoring of the cessation of hostilities." *With reports from Rosa-May V. de Guzman, Charlie C. Señase and Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Political risk prompts cut in RP credit rating

From page A1

of 54.81 per dollar. The local currency later rebounded to around 54.88 to the greenback.

"There is some knee-jerk reaction in the foreign exchange market," said Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco, who later denied that the bank had intervened to help the peso.

Spreads on Philippine sovereign dollar bonds widened by five to seven basis points, raising concerns the government might have more difficulty in financing its borrowings.

The Philippines, the largest sovereign debt issuer in Asia outside of Japan, had $56.1 billion in external debt at the end of June, up from $55.8 billion three months earlier.

The government has said it plans to issue as much as $1 billion worth of global bonds by the end of the year to fund requirements for the rest of 2003 and 2004.

After the Moody's announcement, Finance Secretary Jose Camacho said there would be no change in the government's borrowing plans for this year.

Analysts said the outlook cut was not that surprising, because it brought Moody's more into line with other agencies, although it did underline the political uncertainty that has been the main factor behind a slump in foreign investment this year.

"The fiscal situation has stabilized, but going forward the bias is still towards the downside," said Dilip Shahani, head of Asian Credit Research at HSBC. "The big question in the Philippines is who will become the next president."

Indonesia rose on the ratings scale on Tuesday as the Philippines risked another fall. Moody's said it had raised its rating on Indonesian debt and the outlook was stable.

A growing worry about the Philippines is that its debt is so high that interest payments use up cash that could otherwise be spent on much-needed investment.

"The fiscal numbers have been better in recent months but then government targets have been much less ambitious," said Brian Coulton, Fitch's senior director of Asian sovereign ratings.

"In fact, debt dynamics in Philippines are quite adverse as you have got a situation where debt is now around 35 percent of total government revenue," he said.

The Philippines has struggled to keep a lid on its budget deficit, exceeding three successive targets last year, but it has made progress this year. Moody's maintained the negative outlook on the Philippines' Baa3 rating for government domestic debt.

Standard & Poor's downgraded its long-term foreign currency rating on the Philippines to two notches below investment grade in April due to the country's huge fiscal shortfall.

Fitch followed suit in June. *Reports from Clarissa S. Batino and Reuters*

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METRO

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

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Cops act to check rob rash

THE SERIES of daring robberies in the metropolis has alarmed the National Capital Region Police Office. And if this rash of crimes continues, heads will surely roll.

In a statement, NCRPO Director Reynaldo Velasco ordered police officials in Metro Manila to tighten security in their respective areas and set up additional checkpoints to abate crimes.

And if police officials fail to comply, Regional Directorial Staff chief Ernesto Belen said "they will be axed from their posts."

In a memorandum, Velasco ordered police officials to establish additional checkpoints and submit reports on an hourly basis.

The police were also ordered to increase police visibility to check the activities of crime syndicates which, the NCRPO said, had "resorted to a grand design of destabilizing the (metropolis)."

The NCRPO also ordered heightened implementation of the police's anticarnapping campaign and the Oplan Bakal and Oplan Sita programs through regular conduct of mobile patrols, especially in areas notorious for high criminality.

The other day, six armed robbers struck at the Metro Rail Transit GMA-Kamuning Station in Quezon City and took away about P1 million in MRT's daily cash collection. The robbers killed one guard and seriously wounded another.

The daring MRT robbery came after a series of bank robberies in the past few weeks.

Yesterday, Velasco also ordered a massive manhunt for the MRT robbery suspects after police came up with the cartographic sketches of the suspects. *Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.*

LOOK MA, NO CHAIRS!
The medical staff of the Quirino Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City were literally on their feet doing their jobs Tuesday after the hospital director, Dr. Rosalinda Arandia, allegedly removed staff chairs as some sort of punishment for alleged inattentiveness of the staff to patients' needs. Earlier, a team from the Marikina Rescue 161 reportedly complained to the hospital, but the staff claimed that their side was not heard properly by the director. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Wayward car hits 4 pupils at school

Driver blames auto transmission

By Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.

WHAT began as an ordinary day at school turned into every parent's nightmare yesterday when a rampaging Mitsubishi Galant hit four pupils inside the Philippine Cultural High School in Caloocan City.

The car also left three other vehicles damaged along the driveway of the school on 8th Avenue, Barangay Galino.

Family driver Danilo Barcos had just dropped off his employer's children at the school at about 7 a.m. when he stepped back into the Galant, where his employer was waiting.

According to the driver, he put the car's automatic transmission on "drive" then released the hand brake. That was when the car zoomed forward out of control.

Jocelyn Go told the INQUIRER that she was inside her Honda CRV with her 5-year-old son when she heard the loud screeching of a car from behind. The next thing she knew, the Galant had hit her CRV and broke its tail lights.

The Galant continued to surge forward and bumped a Mazda Sedan, where Suat Luan Ngie, 49, was preparing to leave after dropping off her 10-year-old daughter.

Barcos' car then rammed Manilito Sebua, 6, and his brother Jacob, 7.

Ngie recalled the horrifying cries of witnesses.

Still out of control, the Galant then bumped a Toyota Corolla taxi before running over Chin Mai Chan, 10, and her younger brother Carl Angelo, 9.

The car then went to a crashing halt after smashing into a school wall.

The Sebua siblings were rushed to the Chinese General Hospital but were reportedly released later after treatment.

On the other hand, the Chans remained confined at the Manila Central University Hospital after reportedly sustaining broken hips and thighs.

According to Barcos, he avoided running over seven pupils but instead bumped into Go's Honda CRV.

He said the car continued to move forward even as he stepped hard on the brakes.

While he and his boss were unhurt from the incident, he narrated between sobs how he was mauled by the school's security guards and bystanders.

One guard even pummeled the back of his head with a handgun, Barcos related as he wiped his tears.

Barcos had been driving for four years but he said that was his first time to drive a car with automatic transmission. He started with his present employer on Sept. 18.

He has a wife and a 3-year-old child in Butuan City, Agusan del Norte.

Barcos now faces charges of reckless imprudence resulting in serious multiple physical injuries and damage to property.

Records lost, then found, decide drug pusher's fate

CHINESE Po Chuan nearly got off the hook for drug trafficking after the records of his case mysteriously disappeared in 2001.

The records later resurfaced as mysteriously as these disappeared and this has led to his conviction and sentencing to life imprisonment.

Po, alias Gilbert Yang, was arrested on March 23, 1999, by a team of the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force.

He was later charged with selling 1 kilo of shabu, then worth P600,000.

During trial, Po denied selling shabu and claimed that he was framed.

But Judge Demetrio Macapagal Sr. of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 79 believed more the testimony of the arresting lawmen, thus the conviction.

The decision could have been different, however.

On Oct. 25, 2001, the documents of the drug case disappeared after someone broke into the courtroom.

An investigation was launched and the court's employees were subjected to a lie detector test.

After a few weeks into the probe, the missing documents were found abandoned near a photocopying machine on the ground floor of the QC Hall of Justice. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

'Robin Padilla' found dead

YESTERDAY, Robin Padilla was found dead.

But he was not the country's so-called Bad Boy. He was just his namesake, a 14-year-old high school student, who drowned at the Pasig River.

SP02 Edison Bertoldo of the Western Police District Homicide Division said the boy was reported missing last Sunday.

He said the boy went with his friends for a swim at the Pasig river near their house at Hulo St., Coronado, Mandaluyong City, around 10 a.m. that day.

A Philippine Coast Guard patrol found Padilla's body under the Jones Bridge around 7:30 a.m. *Tarra Quismundo*

Senior citizens set walkathon

By Norman Bordadora

MORE than 1,000 senior citizens are expected to join the Walk for Life walkathon for the elderly this morning to kick off the country's observance of the Elderly Filipino Week today until next week.

Immediately after the long walk at the Quirino Grandstand, the elderly could start availing of free rides on the coaches of the Light Rail Transit.

To avail of the free ride, the elderly only need to present their senior citizen's identification cards to LRT security personnel and station tellers upon entry.

Senior citizens' cards are issued through local government units by the Department of Social Welfare and Development to persons 60 years old and above.

"The suspension of fees for senior citizens is part of the LRT Administration's social commitment to the elderly," said LRTA administrator Teodoro Cruz Jr.

The observance of Elderly Filipino week is led by the DSWD in coordination with the Department of Health, LGUs and other government and non-government organizations.

"It aims to promote the rights and well-being of the older persons as well as highlight their contributions in building a strong republic and in strengthening the family," the DSWD said in a statement.

The walkathon, which starts at 6 a.m., will be participated in by the Federation of Senior Citizens' Association of the Philippines-National Capital Region and other senior citizens' associations.

The senior citizens are expected to lobby for the passage of the Magna Carta for Older Persons, which aims to reinforce the implementation of programs and services for the elderly. The bill is pending in Congress.

METROBRIEFS

2 cops shot dead

TWO POLICEMEN were killed when a man whom they had asked to leave from an area in San Juan on Monday shot them. P01 Joseph Alcoran and P03 Reynaldo Arceno were earlier sent to check on a man loitering near a gasoline station on Edsa and Connecticut Street in Greenhills. The owner of the station, Jeffrey Dy, had asked police help to make the suspect, identified as Gerry Panaguiton, leave the area. When Alcoran and Arceno arrived, they checked the suspect but instead of leaving, Panaguiton went to the Parco Department Store across the station. The cops warned he could be arrested if he stayed on. Panaguiton then drew a .38-caliber pistol and shot the cops. Arceno died on the spot. Alcoran was hit in the chest and rushed to the hospital where he died. The suspect then drove off with the cops' patrol car but was arrested later by a responding police team. *Luige del Puerto*

2 hurt by amok

A MEMBER of the elite Special Weapons and Tactics unit and a barangay tanod were critically injured after an amok shot up a residential area in Las Piñas City early yesterday morning. P02 Raul Oller of the Las Pinas City police SWAT team and Roland Buenconsejo, a barangay tanod, sustained multiple gunshot wounds in different parts of their body and are now receiving treatment. Police said Julio Florano had run amuck inside the Lopez Compound around 1:30 a.m. Oller and Buenconsejo immediately responded but were hit when Florano opened fire on the street from the third floor of his home. He was subdued when he ran out of bullets. *Alcuin Papa*

Triskelion anniversary

THE TRISKELION's Grand Fraternity, founded in the University of the Philippines, will celebrate its 35th year on Oct. 4, 2003 with the theme: "Magkakasama sa bagong yugto ng paghango ng tunay na Triskelion tungo sa pagpapatawag ng bawat isa." Founding Fathers Rod Confesor and Talek Pablo will host this year's celebration at the Amoranto Sports Complex, starting at 1 p.m. The program will include inter-area and individual athletic competitions. All chapters and councils in the National Capital Region are enjoined to attend. Entrance is free to all members of the Tau Gamma Phi and Tau Gamma Sigma.

Child laborers rescued

AGENTS of the National Bureau of Investigation have rescued five minors allegedly forced to work in a food establishment in Cavite. Lauro Reyes, NBI's Anti-Human Trafficking Division head, said in a statement that a 15-year-old girl from Laguna, who was among those rescued, said that she and the other minors were recruited to work as waitresses in Monte Carlo Food Camp in Barangay San Antonio, Cavita City. The NBI identified the owner of the establishment as Ronnie Gana. *Tarra Quismundo*

Rodolfo; 53

RETIRED Police Senior Supt. Rudy Moyeno Rodolfo died of cardiac arrest on Sunday, Sept. 28, while undergoing treatment at the National Kidney Institute in Quezon City. He was 53.

Rodolfo was former regional intelligence chief of the Philippine National Police in Region 4 and former chief of police of Lucena City.

He is survived by his wife, Mely, and daughter Faye.

His remains lie in state at Chapel C, Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe, Makati City. Interment will be announced later.

Carey; 25

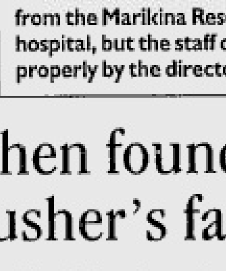
CHRISTIAN Carey of Cainta Greenpark Village, died on Sept. 29. He was 25.

He is survived by his parents, Marilou and Roger; wife, Armi, son John Rizen; brother Ryan and sister Ryan Kristel.

His remains lie in state at #10 Morning Glory Street, Cainta Greenpark Village, Cainta, Rizal.

Interment will be on Sunday, Oct. 5, at Heaven's Gate Cemetery at 9 a.m.

It will take just one word from Kris



MARQUEZ

By Christian V. Esguerra

ALL KRIS Aquino needs to do is say one word for Mayor Joey Marquez to lose his guns.

The Philippine National Police yesterday gave Ms Aquino the "option" to seek the revocation of the gun licenses of Marquez, her estranged lover.

If indeed Marquez had poked a gun at her, Aquino should file a formal complaint before the PNP, said Supt. Carlos Joaquin Jr., chief of the Firearms Management Bureau.

"We will take cognizance of that then there will be a process to revoke the licenses," he told reporters.

Police records show that Marquez has five licensed firearms registered with the PNP. These are three .45-caliber pistols, a .38-caliber pistol and a .22-caliber rifle.

Joaquin said individuals are usually allowed only two guns but the Parañaque mayor has three more owing to his membership to a gun club.

But should it be proven that Marquez had committed a violation, such as what Aquino alleges, the licenses for these five guns would be withdrawn.

He would then have to give up his firearms.

"The process won't take long, not even months," Joaquin stressed.

In case of revocation, Joaquin said it would be difficult for Marquez to request for new licenses.

The mayor would have to be cleared of all criminal charges and undergo neurological and drug testing before he could be allowed to own firearms, the police official explained.

Marquez allegedly threatened to shoot Aquino at the height of a heated argument at their condo unit in Taguig last Sept. 22.

Woman, cop-lover meted death for hubby's murder

By Luige del Puerto

THE PASIG City Regional Trial Court meted out yesterday the death penalty to a woman and her policeman-lover for the murder of the woman's husband in 1995.

RTC Branch 156 Judge Alex Quiros also ordered the lovers, Rolando Mabiliran, an intelligence officer with the Rizal police, and Beverly Tibo-Tan, to pay the family of Reynaldo Tan a total of P180,000 in damages.

In his decision, Quiros said a chain of circumstantial evidence "established beyond moral certainty" the guilt of the accused.

Court records showed that on Feb. 5, 1995, Tan went shopping with Beverly and their children at the Greenhills Commercial Complex in San Juan.

At about 4 p.m., Tan went to the parking area to get his Honda Accord while his family waited at the mall's loading area.

He never made it alive from the parking lot.

As he opened his car, a grenade placed between the driver's seat and the door exploded, killing him instantly.

Quiros said Beverly's reaction to her husband's death was unusual for a wife under the circumstances.

The court noted the testimonies of witnesses, who said Beverly seemed "nonchalant and unconcerned" when most wives "would have succumbed to hysteria and uncontained sadness" at what happened.

The court also gave weight to the testimony of bomb expert Chief Insp. Silverio Dollesin, who said only someone very familiar with the victim's movements could have placed the grenade precisely where it was put.

The court established that jealousy and money motivated the killing. Beverly's friend, Janet Pascual, testifed that the estranged wife was very unhappy with her husband's extra marital affairs.

Beverly was also disappointed because she could not get her share of their conjugal property.

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SPORTS TV Compiled by L. Mangulat

BASEBALL: MLB Division Series, Game 1; 8 a.m. (r-3:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.); ESPN—Baseball's second season begins with this playoff encounter.

BASKETBALL: NBA Greatest Game-Lakers vs Suns, Game 3, 1984 Western Finals; 8 a.m.; Solar Sports—Watch the Los Angeles duo of Magic and Kareem take on the Phoenix pair of Walter Davis and Larry Nance in this crucial playoff match.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres
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It's Ateneo in final versus Far Eastern

A 'Holy' War: Banal against Banal

By Dennis U. Eroa

LARRY Fonacier, no stranger to playing the hero's role, delivered the killer shots as title holder Ateneo subdued arch rival La Salle, 74-68, and barged into the UAAP basketball finals last night at the jampacked Araneta Coliseum.

A highly emotional crowd watched as Ateneo and La Salle fought furiously, but in the end it was Fonacier, in tandem with slotman Paolo Bugia, who spoiled the Archers' bid to author one of the league's stunning reversals.

The 6-foot-6 Bugia, back after a career-threatening knee injury he suffered last year, completed a three-point play off rookie Jerwin Gaco, 67-62, and Fonacier, free from Jun Jun Cabatu's menacing presence, answered a Gaco split with an 18-footer, 69-63, 1:01 remaining.

Fonacier, a former junior MVP, added a magic touch to the tension-filled situation, when he calmly sank four straight free throws which finally dashed the Archers' hopes, 73-68, 13 seconds left.

"I'm speechless and I'm glad its over,' said a visibly relieved Ateneo coach Joel Banal. "It's always down the wire whenever we meet La Salle."

"Larry's going to hit the big shots," added Banal.

With the victory, the Eagles advanced to the best-of-three finals against Far Eastern coached by Banal's younger brother, Koy. The series dubbed as the "Holy War" starts tomorrow at 4 p.m.

GAMES TOMORROW *(Araneta Coliseum)*
11 a.m.—UP vs Adamson (Women's)
2 p.m.—Adamson vs Ateneo (Juniors)
4 p.m.—Ateneo vs Far Eastern (Seniors)

As expected, the clash between the country's most popular collegiate teams wasn't lacking in on and off-court tussles.

Wesley Gonzales, disappointed with his offensive touch, engaged Joseph Yeo in trash talk, while former Eagles Enrico Villanueva, Rainier Sison, Chris Quimpo, Andrew Cruz and Sonny Tadeo got involved in a fracas with La Salle supporters after the game.

"Wesley's just like that. I'm glad that he's still in one piece after this game so that he can play in the finals," Banal joked.

The game was momentarily stopped when the referee slapped Cabatu with an unsportsmanlike foul after Yeo hit a booming triple, 71-66, 15.3 seconds remaining. Coach Franz Pumaren protested the call to no avail.

Banal acknowledged the contributions of point guard Macky Escalona and the steady presence of two-time MVP Rich Alvarez, who kept the Eagles soaring by rediscovering his offensive touch to complement his awesome defensive skills.

Escalona finished with 12 points as he took over the playmaking chores from the suspended Lewis Tenorio, while the 6-foot-4 Alvarez scored 12 points, including two triples, and grabbed 10 rebounds.

Fonacier finished with 20 points while Bugia, who sank a long desperation three-pointer early in the last quarter, added 17 as Ateneo avoided the ignominy of being the first top seed in the Final Four to lose to the No. 4 team.

Joseph Yeo fired a game-high 26 points for La Salle, which battled back from 33-44 at halftime to give Ateneo its biggest scare in the tournament.

Yeo also shot 31 points as the Archers dragged the Eagles into yesterday's playoff for the second title slot with a 76-72 overtime decision.

Mark Cardona, La Salle's ace guard, suited up, but failed to see action with his strained left ankle still bothering him.

The first quarter ended at 21-21 before the Eagles slowly pulled away to that 44-33 lead behind Fonacier, Alvarez and Escalona.

Yeo led a sizzling rally that cut the Ateneo lead to 55-58 and tied the game early in the last quarter, but the Archers just couldn't get the go-ahead basket despite several opportunities.

GONZALES
15
BUGIA
21

THE GAME'S done but the heat generated by the bitter, emotional encounter doesn't cool off easily. A visibly agitated Joseph Yeo (middle) of La Salle and Wesley Gonzales of Ateneo engage in trash talk in the Eagles' front court after the final buzzer. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

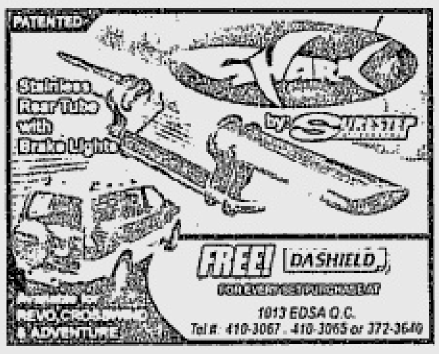
When the final buzzer sounded, school and team officials stormed into the court to prevent players from confronting each other even as a scuffle occurred behind the Ateneo bench.

Scores:

ADMU 74—Fonacier 20, Bugia 17, Alvarez 12 Escalona 12, Kramer 8, Arao 2, Intal 2, Membrere 1, Tiu 0, Gonzales 0.

DLSU 68—Yeo 26, Gaco 16, Benitez 9, Cabatu 8, Casio 4, Gatchalian 2, Sharma 2, Ramos 1, Aquino 0, Tang 0.

Quarters: 21-21, 44-33, 58-55, 74-68.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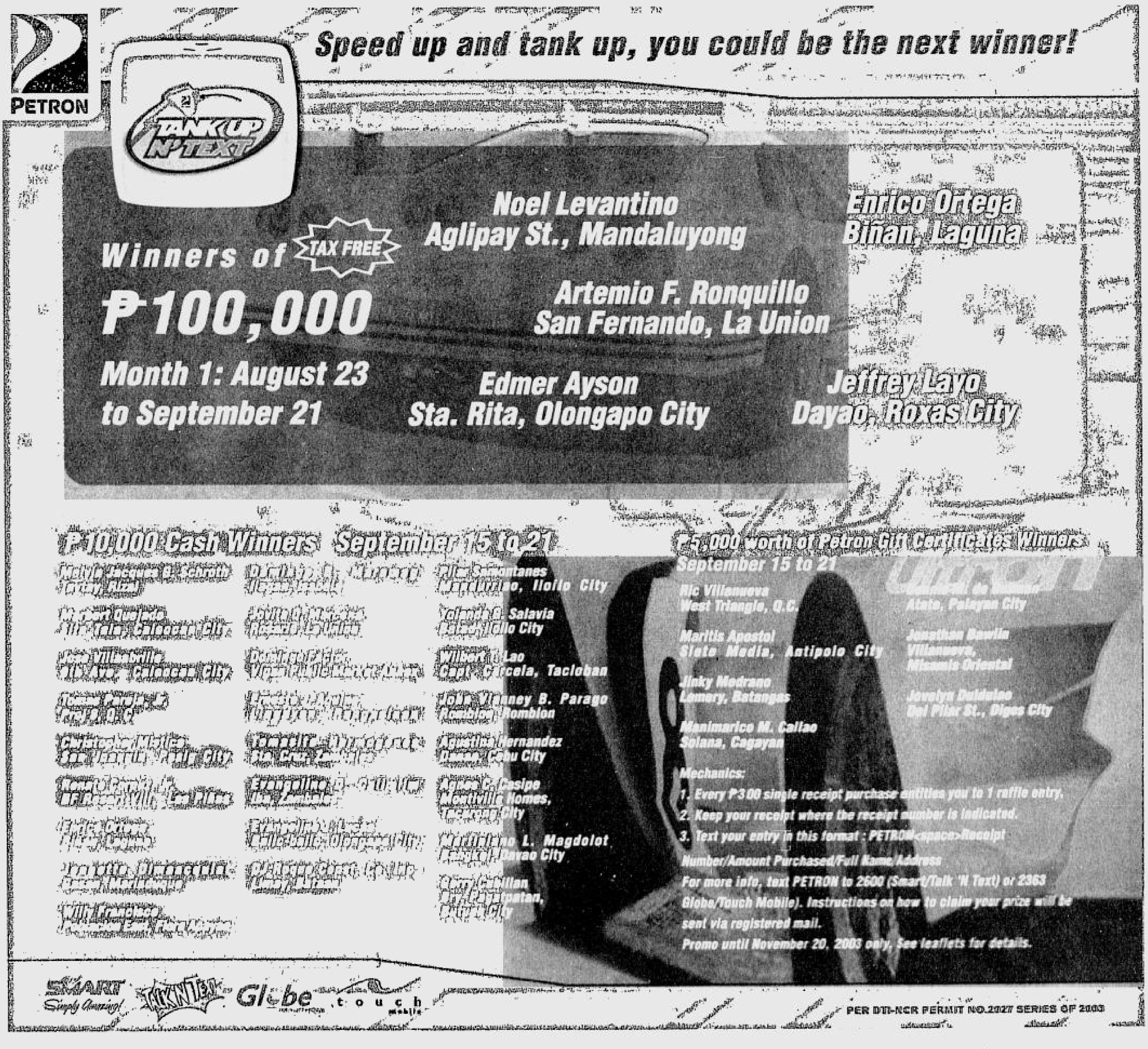
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John Vianney B. Parago
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Agustina Hernandez
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Final SEAG roster known today

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE FATE of the national men's football team will be decided when the Southeast Asian Games technical commission tries to complete the Philippine delegation to the Vietnam SEA Games in a meeting today.

Also to be discussed is the lineup of men's basketball, athletics and women's boat race.

The SEA Games technical commission had earlier imposed three conditions for the inclusion of football in the national contingent, foremost of which is its promise to bring in seven Fil-European players to beef up the squad.

The seven imports must also be 20 years old or younger who will continue to play for the country in the 2005 Manila SEA Games.

However, the Philippine Football Federation could only come up with three reinforcements. They are Fil-Briton Michael Dela Rosa Napolitano and brothers Sache Ian Steve and Andy Gerbert Valentin Olana Proclinov of Germany.

Napolitano is 20 years old, while Sache and Andy are 17 and 19, respectively, according to their bio-data submitted to the Philippine Olympic Committee.

POC spokesman Gus Villanueva said the players did not send any photographs to accompany their bio-data.

SEA Games chief of mission Julian Camacho, who will preside over today's meeting in the absence of commission chair Steve Hontiveros, earlier said the commission might consider football's inclusion if there are at least four imports.

The cagers and the tracksters, composed of 12 and 30 players, respectively, are expected to easily earn the commission's nod considering that most of them have already passed the criteria.

The women's traditional boat race team is reportedly not going to make it for failure to put up the required 25-member roster.

So far, 386 athletes have already made the RP contingent.

Villanueva said the Vietnam organizers set an Oct. 31 deadline for all athletes vying in the Games.

Shell flaunts new import vs Peña, SMB

GAMES TODAY *(Philsports Arena)*
5 p.m.—Shell vs San Miguel Beer
7:30 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Talk N Text

DORIAN Peña returns to San Miguel Beer when it tackles Shell today even as Talk 'N Text and Coca-Cola dispute the Group B lead in the Samsung-PBA Reinforced Conference at the Philsports Arena.

The Beermen try to sustain their breakthrough win against Purefoods when they collide at 5 p.m. with the Turbochargers, who will be parading a new import in Jamal Kendrich.

Kendrich, a veteran of the Lebanon league, replaces former Houston Rocket Tim Breaux who was a flop in his debut as the Turbochargers bowed to the Barangay Ginebra Kings in Calape, Bohol last Saturday.

The Phone Pals, the hottest team in the league with six straight victories, hope to match the vaunted speed of Coca-Cola in their 7:30 p.m. encounter.

"We will run with them," said Talk 'N Text interim coach Ariel Vanguardia, who recently steered the Phone Pals to an 89-81 victory over the Sta. Lucia Realtors to grab the solo lead in Group B with a 6-1 slate. Coke is close behind at 5-1.

Vanguardia returned to the Phone Pals after serving a five-game suspension at the start of the conference. While Vanguardia was away, assistant coach Virgil Villavicencio took over and racked up four consecutive wins for the Phone Pals.

Peña, back after a long suspension for failing a drug test, will be a vital force for SMB, but the spotlight will again be on import Kwan Johnson.

San Miguel's third import this conference, Johnson led the Beermen to the win column after five straight setbacks following an 85-73 whipping of the Purefoods TJ Hotdogs last week.

"I hope he could turn things around and start a winning trend for us," said San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico, whose Beermen are in their worst start in decades.

Aside from matching the Tigers' speed and versatility, the Phone Pals hope to exploit their advantage in the shaded area through man-mountain Asi Taulava and import Damien Cantrell.

In between the games, it will be brawn against grace when agile low-post artist Dennis Espino of Sta. Lucia Realty battles FedEx's 6-7 center Yancy de Ocampo in the PBA King of the Court one-on-one tournament.

June Navarro

STANDINGS	W	L
Group A		
Sta. Lucia	4	2
Alaska	2	4
FedEx	2	5
Purefoods	1	5
San Miguel	1	5
Group B		
Talk N Text	6	1
Coca-Cola	5	1
Red Bull	4	2
Ginebra	4	2
Shell	2	4

ROB Wainwright of Coca-Cola harasses Asi Taulava of Talk 'N Text in this bit of action during the two teams' All-Filipino title series. AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

RP-Lhuillier cagers 15th in ABC tourney

HARBIN, China—The Philippines-Cebuana Lhuillier trounced perennial Southeast Asian rival Malaysia, 78-63, Tuesday to finish 15th place in the 22nd Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC) Championships here Tuesday.

Although they failed to improve on their 11th place finish two years ago, the Filipinos made sure the bragging rights for being Southeast Asia's top country remain with them.

Overall, the Filipinos finished with a 2-5 win-loss record.

Aside from Malaysia, the Filipinos also won over Jordan, 83-67, in the elimination round.

Scores:

RP-CEBUANA LHUILLIER 78— Oreta 21, Calimag 18, Pingris 12, Melencio 12, Wilson 8, Madrid 5, Cruz 2, De Guzman 0, Nicdao 0.

MALAYSIA 63—K. Satyase 26, Koh Way Tek 14, Ang Tun Kaw 6, Lim Yik Kean 5, Francis Loh 3, Tan Kian Ho 3, Harjinders 2, Ng Ye 2, Wong 2.

Quarters: 17-13, 35-23, 63-41, 78-63.

RP bets face tall odds in Asian karting

TOP Filipino karters, led by M&M Racing's Michelle Bumgarner, gear up for a tough challenge when the Carmona Circuit Philippines plays host to the 2003 Casino Filipino-Shell Asian Karting Open championship on Oct. 3-5 in Carmona, Cavite.

The event, sponsored by Casino Filipino, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Bridgestone, Nokia, Denso, Palmer Asia Inc. and Vivere Suite Hotel, also serves as the second leg of the 2003 Asian Karting Open championships which kicked off in August at the Sentul Circuit in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Some 60 karters, including entries from Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Brunei, will be vying for titles in the Formula-A, Intercontinental-A Juniors, Formula Rotax Max Seniors, Formula Rotax Max Juniors and the Cadet 85 categories.

"This is much better than before, since only the best of the best are competing in the event," said CCP project director Lot M. Tan. "So expect the event to be more exciting as it will not only showcase younger and more aggressive karters from the Southeast Asian region but also superior machines and more thrilling high-speed action."

Only 15, Bumgarner, the defending champion in the Intercontinental-A Junior class, guns for her second straight victory following her top finish in the Jakarta kickoff.

Indonesia will field in 10 of its top karters led by Ryan Anthony Monoaya, who is eyeing to get back at Bumgarner in their category.

Monoaya actually led Bumgarner for most of the 14-lap kickoff leg, but the Philippine bet found the open door in the last lap to claim the checkered flag.

Imsan Zacharias, who finished third in the same race, will lead the six-man delegation from Malaysia.

Fast-rising Tyson Sy of Demvels, Dado Pena of Birel-A3 Motorsports and Allan Uy of Primus Racedevils will don the country's colors in the premiere Formula-A class, while two-time Karter of the Year JP Tuason of Tuason Racing-Addict Mobile and Lee Bumgarner will spearhead the campaign in the Formula Rotax Max Seniors crown.

SPORTSWATCH

Suarez, Cañare within striking distance

FILIPINOS CJ Suarez and Jojo Cañare remained in strong contention after the second block of the AMF Bowling World Cup at Planeta Sipango in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Suarez, gold medalist in the 2001 Kuala Lumpur SEA Games, rolled 1113 Monday night to raise his total to 2191 after 10 games and climb to fifth place in the men's division. Cañare, 1997 Jakarta SEA Games gold medalist, slipped from fourth to eighth in the women's division following a 1016 series and a 2109 total. Suarez, who ranked 13th after the first block, raised his average to 219.1, while Cañare dropped to 210.9. Belgium's Chris Van Damme seized the lead in the men's side with a 1194 series and a 2291 total. First block leader Mohammed Khalifa Al Qubaisi fell to second at 2286. Costa Rica's Marie Ramirez stayed ahead in the distaff side with a 1121 and a 2256 total. The top 24 in both divisions will advance to the next round.

Registration starts for marathon finals

ANTICIPATING another big field of entries for the 27th national Milo Marathon finals set on Oct. 19, the event's national race director has opened the registration for all runners in the 3K, 5K, and 10K fun runs to be held simultaneously with the 42K finals. The Milo Marathon is enjoying a banner year this year in terms of number of participants, with the final elimination run in Cebu City attracting a record 10,800 runners. "The Metro Manila elimination race had close to 14,000 entries, although the actual turnout was lower because of the heavy rains on race day. The original date of the race was changed because of the aborted mutiny in Makati. This time, we are looking forward to another big turnout," said race director Rudy Biscocho. Registration fee for the 3K fun run is P40, P50 for the 5K event, and P80 in the 10K run. Each entry must be accompanied by a Milo label of at least 200 grams. Milo T-shirts, which will serve as their uniform, will be given upon registration. Registration for the event, held in partnership this year with Bayview Park Hotel, adidas, Cebu Pacific, Powerbar, and the Department of Tourism, is going on at the Vasquez Madrigal Plaza on Annapolis Street in Greenhills, San Juan.

Top shuttlers vying in V'Verde tilt

THE CREAM of the crop of Philippine badminton will see action in the Philippine Badminton Invitational Championships slated this Saturday at the Valle Verde Country Club courts. Six teams will vie for the P120,000 champion's purse in the country's premier badminton series on TV. Games will be aired at 4-6 p.m. on Sunday on RPN 9 and at 6-8 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday on Solar Sports. SEA Games-bound Ian Piencenaves, the singles champion in last month's JVC Open, will spearhead the Hawk Shuttlers which also includes Bogie de Guia, Manric Zalamea, Amanda Carpo, Melody Villaceran, Elaine Lao and team captain Naresh Ramnani. Ex-national champion Melvin Llanes and JVC Open girls' 14-under singles, doubles and mixed doubles champion Janina Paredes will banner the Feather Whackers. The other teams are the Heron Hitters, Eagle Smashers, Pelican Aces and Duck Defenders.

Hawks, Wizards dispute Naascu title

IT will be University of Manila against University of Makati in the finals of the 2003 National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) basketball tournament at the Philsports Arena in Pasig. University of Makati demolished World Citi College (Quezon City), 90-70, for the second time in as many days to set up a winner-take-all showdown against UM. The title clash, set at 2:30 p.m. today, will serve as preliminary to the regular PBA Reinforced Conference doubleheader. The Hawks, who beat the Wizards for the crown last year, are gunning for a third straight championship.

Blu, Montaña fives play in Cebu

BLU Star Powder and Montaña Pawnshop, honing up for the 2003 PBL Platinum Cup, bring their rivalry to Cebu City starting today when they compete in the Cebu Basketball Federation (CBF)-Philippine Basketball League (PBL) Dual Meet Year 2. The Jewelers and Detergent Kings played one game each in Mati, Davao Oriental and Davao City last month, with Montaña winning both games. Blu and Montaña will go up against local teams like Fash, All, Care, GMC and Grachiya in a short tournament. Blu won the initial staging of the tournament last year. "This project is beneficial for the PBL and CBF. We are hoping that more teams (from Cebu) will join this tournament next year," said Commissioner Chino Trinidad. All six teams, according to CBF president Cecilio S. Gillamac, will see action in the opening day which will be highlighted by the 7 p.m. Blu-Montaña showdown at the Southwestern University Gym.

Doña Carmen booters advance

DAVAO CITY—Doña Carmen National High edged Ateneo de Davao-A, 2-1, last Sunday to lead seven other teams into the quarterfinals of the Davao provincial Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football tournament at the Agro field here. The Dona Carmen booters swept their four assignments in Group A, with the Ateneans finishing second on a 3-1 card after beating Modern International Learning Center, 11-0. Joining Doña Carmen in the quarters are Holy Child (main, EMAR Learning Center, Ateneo-a, Daniel R. Aguinaldo National High, Rizal Memorial Colleges-A, Agro High and Holy Child-Mintal. In other crucial matches last weekend, Aguinaldo topped SOS Children's Village, 2-0, after battling Holy Child (Minta) to a 1-1 tie; Holy Child (main) spilled Crossing Bayabas, 3-0; EMAR routed Davao City National High, 13-0; RMC-A clobbered Ateneo-B, 17-0; and Agro whipped Holy Child (Buhangin), 7-2.

PCA serves up junior tennis Oct. 18

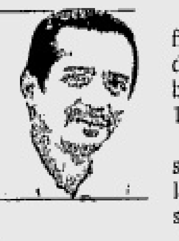
THE PHILIPPINE Columbian Association Open Juniors Tennis Championships, featuring the country's leading age-groupers, will be held from Oct. 18 to Nov. 23 at the PCA courts in Paco. Events on tap are boys' and girls' 18-under, 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and unisex 10-under divisions. Players who wish to join may call Loida Mallare and Cesar San Juan at the Philta office at 525-6434 or Anette Reclusado and tournament director Bobby Mangunay at the PCA Open Secretariat at 563-8501 loc. 113, 131, 132 and 562-9278. Deadline of submission of entries is on Oct. 13 at 5 p.m. Entry fee is P200.

St. Joseph Han bet favored

MAYOR Nene Aguilar's bet St. Joseph Han, the same entry that won the recent LPC Annual 6-Stag Derby, starts out as the top favorite in today's National Cockers Association 7-Stag Derby at the Araneta Coliseum. Aguilar, who fielded the upgraded YLH Husley Lemon reds and greys, garnered three victories last Monday along with Gov. Ito Ynares (Binangonan Balbina Cup 1), Mayor Jessie Viceo (San Rafael) and Gerry Ramos (KGR Scorpio 1). Derby hosts are Jun and Rudy Jingco of Pampanga, Rep. Rudy Albano and Frank Berin. This event is the third of five NCA stag derbies this year. Two more events are set on Oct. 6 and 8, hosted by Gerry Ramos and Mayor Aguilar, and on Oct. 13 and 15, hosted by Louie Cua and Tony Tan. For inquiries, call Araneta Coliseum at 911-3101 or 911-2928.

The BAP: same-same, no shame

BARE EYE



Recab Trinidad

THIS is the story of a sports association, run mainly by two men, a Batman-Robin tandem that has taken over the affairs of amateur basketball in the Philippines.

It is a story of how these two had teamed up allegedly for the best of basketball, still the most popular game in the country.

The duo had failed several times in their previous sorties but, as fate would have it, they have refused to give up the ship.

Today, however, it's being asked whether the men running the basketball association still find it honorable to stay in their position.

Actually, there is this suggestion that this is the time to write an apt epitaph for the current national amateur basketball leadership.

***

Of course, they could continue calling the agency the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

But after the latest basketball debacle in China comes this clamor to change that to Blind, Brute or Bum Association of the Philippines (BAP).

Of course, you know why.

Based on the record of the RP cage team's latest international shame, it was apparent that the BAP did not know where it was going, or what it was doing.

Sorry, but, you see, this ignominy could still be counted as a record, a national mark.

Because, no matter how we try to shun it, the silly, sickening stink registered by the country in the Asian Basketball Confederation championship is sure to rank the current BAP leadership, under the tandem of Tiny Literal and Graham Lim, as the most inept in our sports history.

***

To those who don't know it, or are too old to remember, the ABC championship was born in the Philippines. It had its first tournament in Manila in 1960.

Carlos Loyzaga, the late Carlos Badion and Loreto Carbonnel were among the biggest stars of that inaugural basketball fiesta; although the lean, dusky Narciso Bernardo, playing for the first time for the RP team, stole the thunder from the legends and was chosen hands-down as the ABC's first rookie of the tournament.

That was a glorious period for Philippine basketball, to say the least.

Until 1973, when the RP squad led by the likes of Bobby Jaworski and Bogs Adornado drubbed the feared South Korean team at the Rizal Coliseum for the ABC title, the Philippines was a respected, feared competitor in the region.

For the record, the previous year, in the 1972 Munich Olympics, also marked the last time the Philippines would play in a basketball Olympiad.

***

Well, the birth of the PBA and the emergence of China, which returned to the Asian fold and swept the 1975 ABC championship in Bangkok, marked the decline of Philippine stature in Asian basketball.

Of course, the PBA agreed to eventually field a pro selection, and RP did make a dent by salvaging the silver medal, despite back-to-back mauling from China in the 1990 Beijing Asian Games.

Yes, the PBA has continuously sent pro selections only to the Asian Games, with the last one landing out of the medal, despite a sensational showing against South Korea.

Meanwhile, the BAP, now under Literal and Lim, had to repeatedly scratch bottom in their bid to make a respectable showing in the ABC, which serves as the Asian qualifier for the Olympics.

No, the current BAP regime has not been sleeping on the job.

The question to ask is: what it has been doing while it prides itself of developing basketball in the country?

***

In the first place, does the BAP have what it could call an organized program?

This question is being raised because the result of the RP participation in the Harbin, China ABC series, where it was to face lowly Malaysia at press time in a bid to avoid the bottom, would more than confirm the rotten state of leadership in the amateur basketball body.

OK, there are more than a handful of ready alibis that the BAP could use in offering an excuse for the ultimate shame in the ABC.

But, win or lose against Malaysia, the current BAP regime will be remembered for the dark, dirty dumping of the Philippines to the garbage bin of Asian caging.

The BAP has succeeded in totally overturning the fortunes of the national sport.

From best to worst, from pride to ultimate shame.

This only means the BAP is bound to lose whatever little respect it has from majority of our basketball leagues and organizations, like the UAAP, PBA and the PBL.

But don't and never expect the amateur basketball leadership to quit.

After all, it could claim a measure of success by demonstrating to everybody why the Filipino continues to patronize, with primitive passion, a wrong national game.

PLAYOFFS ON

Cubs, Red Sox early favorites

SOSA AP

NEW YORK—Even before Pedro Martinez pitches or Sammy Sosa swings, there's a buzz about these playoffs. Baseball romantics, this really could be the year: Red Sox vs Cubs.

And what a World Series it would be.

"Hey, didn't Bill Buckner play for both teams?" Cubs' third-string catcher Josh Paul said Monday. "I can see it now. It's Game 7, the game is tied and we go 28 innings. They just stop it and say, 'You're both champs.'"

Of course, old October hands Barry Bonds, Derek Jeter and Greg Maddux might get in the way once the games begin. But for the moment, Boston and Chicago are the postseason darlings.

It all starts at Yankee Stadium on Tuesday afternoon, when the Minnesota Twins play New York.

Later in the day, the Florida Marlins take on Bonds and the San Francisco Giants at Pacific Bell Park. Then at night, Sosa and the Cubs face Russ Ortiz and the Braves at Turner Field.

On Wednesday, Martinez and the Red Sox will be at Oakland.

Boston will be trying to win its first World Series title since 1918 when it beat—naturally—the Cubs.

Meanwhile, Mike Hargrove was fired Monday as manager of the Baltimore Orioles, one day after the team finished its fourth consecutive losing season under his direction. Jerry Manuel was also fired Monday as manager of the Chicago White Sox. *AP*

Davis Cup final set on grass

MELBOURNE, Australia—Tennis Australia on Tuesday announced the Nov. 28-30 Davis Cup final between Australia and Spain would be played on natural grass at the Rod Laver Arena.

The portable grass court used in the 2001 final between Australia and France had been stored and maintained outside the venue and would be transported back to Melbourne Park and installed over the Rebound Ace surface before Nov. 19, Tennis Australia said.

Australia advanced to the decider with a win over Switzerland, clinched when 2002 Wimbledon champion and former world No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt rallied to beat current Wimbledon champion Roger Federer. *AP*

AT SLLP BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Light Hearted 2. Early Warning 3. Strong Alphonse

Race 2—1. Night Flight 2. Maple My Love 3. Regal Reality

Race 3—1. Snowy Market 2. Super Dancer 3. Well Noted 4. Juan Marco 5. Guts

Race 4—1 E-Mail 2. Hezabellagio 3. Top Most 4. Everybodyhappy

Race 5—1. Dallas 2. Persian Slew 3. Candid Suitor 4. Parrot Moe 5. Music Quest 6. Pasirit

Race 6—1. Strong Colony/Star Material 2. Sky Bound 3. Exchange Deal

Race 7—1. May's Magic 2. Bring Home D Bacon 3. Something Silver 4. Master Professor 5. Precious Time

Race 8—1 Tini Bambini 2. Chairman of D Board 3. With Feeling

Race 9—1 Gentleman's Lady 2. Jamie's Princess 3. La Española 4. Rose in Bloom 5. Bemedalled Ruler 6. Serendipity

US booters seek semis vs Norway

NEW YORK—Defending Women's World Cup champion United States will have to beat its biggest rival to reach the semifinals of this year's tournament.

The Americans, who completed a perfect first round by beating North Korea, 3-0, on Sunday, will face 1995 champion Norway in the quarterfinals on Wednesday in Foxboro, Massachusetts.

Norway, which is ranked second in the world by Fifa, is the only nation that has a winning record against the top-ranked Americans.

"We know that Norway's a great team and we just have to be on top of our game to do something special against them," said United States striker Abby Wambach.

China, the 1999 runner-up, will face Canada in the last eight in Portland, Oregon, on Thursday.

In the other quarterfinals, Group B winner Brazil takes on Sweden in Foxboro and European champion Germany plays Russia in Portland. *AP*

Nikki airs side on cockfight story

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

MY longtime friend, former Sen. Nikki Coseteng, whom I have not seen in ages, recently wrote this paper to give her side on a story which wrongly portrayed her as "betting heavily in a cockfight held last Sept. 18 at the Caceres Sports Arena with her own kristos or casadores," bet takers who place, pay and/or collect bets for her.

"I am not and have never been a gambler or a big-time bettor of any sort," said Nikki, whose friendship I have valued since 1985 when she accompanied her son Julian Coseteng, then the Philippine Soap Box Derby junior champion, to Akron, Ohio, where I was the All-American Soap Box Derby director for the Philippines.

In her letter, Coseteng stressed: "I did not have my own kristos or casadores. Your correspondent (Juan Escandor Jr. of the PDI Southern Luzon Bureau) did not even bother to check who were doing the betting and immediately concluded I was. He did not even bother to find out whose money was on the (ringside) table and immediately concluded it was mine. It was not.

"I was there because I was invited to grace the derby during the Peñafrancia Festival."

Moreover, Coseteng pointed out that Gov. Al Bichara of Albay, who was mentioned to be present, was not there. (The PDI corrected this error in next day's issue-MRI).

I pity Nikki Coseteng for being a victim of a reckless report.

Newspaper reports should not only be accurate, they should also be fair. Editors and reporters must remember that a reckless, irresponsible or unfounded story could destroy an innocent person's reputation or career. Responsible reporters writing about controversial issues should exercise great care writing their stories because these might harm the good name of a person or organization.

As renowned American journalist Joseph Pulitzer said, "Newsmen should always remember three words, and these words are: 'accuracy, accuracy, accuracy.'"

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Back to naughty business as usual

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SOME months ago, a number of TV hosts were rapped for making statements that exceeded the "GP" standards for propriety on the small screen. After their suspension, the hosts resumed appearing on TV, and they were visibly chastened and verbally more circumspect.

Recently, however, talk on TV has been turning racy again, making some viewers wonder if television people can really learn their lessons and do professional and responsible work more permanently.

It's like the vendors who are periodically persuaded to keep the sidewalks open for pedestrians. They follow the rules for a couple of months, but they eventually go back to the sidewalks, inch by inch, until they're all over the place again, and pedestrians have to once more risk life and limb dodging the traffic on the city's mean streets.

In the erring TV talents' case, there's the added problem of self-importance. The hosts who break the rules are often veteran luminaries who feel that nobody can tell them what to do. When somebody does, and succeeds in temporarily yanking them off the tube, they get really ticked off, and return to naughty business as usual the minute the coast is clear.

It wouldn't be so bad if these recalcitrants and recidivists were few in number. Sadly, however, it's deemed *kuwela* to be *pilyo* on TV, so many talents are flouting the rules just to be "in."

It was hoped that a few suspensions would make everybody else toe the line, but this isn't happening. Therefore, tougher measures may have to be resorted to. This is unfortunate because, for a few weeks there, the campaign against offensive patter on TV was working.

The most important point is, even when the hosts were toeing the line, their shows remained as diverting as they were before. This is convincing proof that TV people don't have to be salacious to be entertaining.

Trouble is, the lesson has only been temporarily learned, and some of the transgressors are back to their doggedly *pilyo* ways. We trust that round-the-clock monitoring teams are keeping tabs on their latest excesses, so that lessons can be taught and learned on a more permanent basis.

> It was hoped that a few suspensions would make everybody else toe the line, but this isn't happening

Boob-tube booboos

HOST: I hear you've just come back from doing some shows in California?

Guest: Yes, they were very successful. By the way, the Filipinos there are very hospitable!

Host: They went out of their way?

Guest: Oh, yes. I would especially like to thank (name) for shopping us!

(That's really hospitable!)

***

Host: Are you and (name of male starlet) sweethearts?

Guest: Not so much as that, but I like him.

Host: Well, what's your relationship really?

Guest: It's open. We go out sometimes, but I can also go out with dates to other guys.

(Can you say that again—s-l-o-w-l-y?

***

Host: A starlet has been saying bad words about you. What do you want to say to her?

Guest: *Wala akong masasabi sa kanya. Ang gusto kong sabihin sa kanya,* at least *ako, hindi nagpa-lipo!*

(*Akala ko ba, wala kang masabi?*)

***

Host: After the car crash you were involved in, what happened?

Guest: *Pagdating nung* victim *sa ospital, diniclare nung duktor.*

(*"Diniclare"—na ano?*)

***

Host: Will you and your girlfriend be getting married before the end of the year, as reported?

Guest: What? Frankly, this is the first time that came out to my mind!

(*Ano raw?*)

***

Host: What about the bouncing check charges that your former partner has been making against you?

Guest: It's not true, and he knows it. I think he's lying to his teeth!

(Wheee!)

***

Host: Is it true that your former house was used by the rebel soldiers?

Guest: No, definitely not. *Wala na kaming pakialam sa poperty na yon!*

(*Ay, poperty!*)

***

Host: What is the result of your breast enhancement operation?

Guest: Obvious *naman, 'di ba? Lumaki talaga siya* compare *sa* before?

(*Ay*, compare *sa* before!)

***

Host: What about you—are you getting married this year?

Guest: No way. My boyfriend and I do no have plans of sitting down.

(Well, you've got to sit down some time!)

Limp Bizkit's 4th album is here

AFTER months of false starts, Limp Bizkit's fourth album is finally in major stores in the Philippines.

Entitled "Results May Vary," the album debuted last week in a listening party in London. It comes three years after the release of its predecessor, the seven-time platinum awarded "Chocolate Starfish and the Hotdog Flavored Water."

"Results May Vary" is from Interscope and released in the Philippines by MCA Universal. It is the first album of Limp Bizkit without its innovative guitarist Wes Borland.

The first single, "Eat You Alive," is currently airing on NU 107. Simultaneously, "Build the Bridge," another track, is climbing the play lists on RX 93.1, TM Magic 89.9 and K-lite 103.5.

Among the artists who contributed materials to "Results May Vary" are Snoop Dogg and Korn's Brian "Head" Welch.

"Results May Vary" is the first Limp Bizkit album to feature new guitarist Mike Smith.

Jamie Cullum...

From page A31

Hyde Park with the band Taxi, and goes on tour with Paul Weller of The Style Council.

His brother, Ben, was a big musical influence on him, and prompted the young Jamie to take up the guitar when he was 8 years old, followed by the piano, and then singing.

Cullum went to school but he was frustrated because his studies got in the way of his music. He decided to take a year off from school and continued to teach himself music and develop his interest in jazz piano, which his brother encouraged by introducing him to the records of Oscar Peterson and Dave Brubeck.

As a teener, Cullum had the chance to stay in Paris, where he was exposed to a whole new world of music. It also marked the first time that he started playing the piano before an audience, in cafés and bars.

When he returned to England, Cullum continued performing in hotels and a jazz club. He tried to go back to school to study English literature, but singing just would not let him go. Soon, he was composing and performing music for films and plays.

Just 19 but already armed with so much experience, Cullum took a leap of faith and produced his own CD, "Jamie Cullum Trio—Heard it all Before." It generated a cult following and sold more than 1,000 copies.

Last April, Cullum signed up a record deal with Universal Records for $1.61 million, but only after a hotly contested bidding war with Sony.

The young musical genius still prefers jeans and T-shirt over the suits and jackets normally associated with jazz.

Cullum is putting a new spin to the jazz scene, and "Pointless Nostalgic" is just the beginning.

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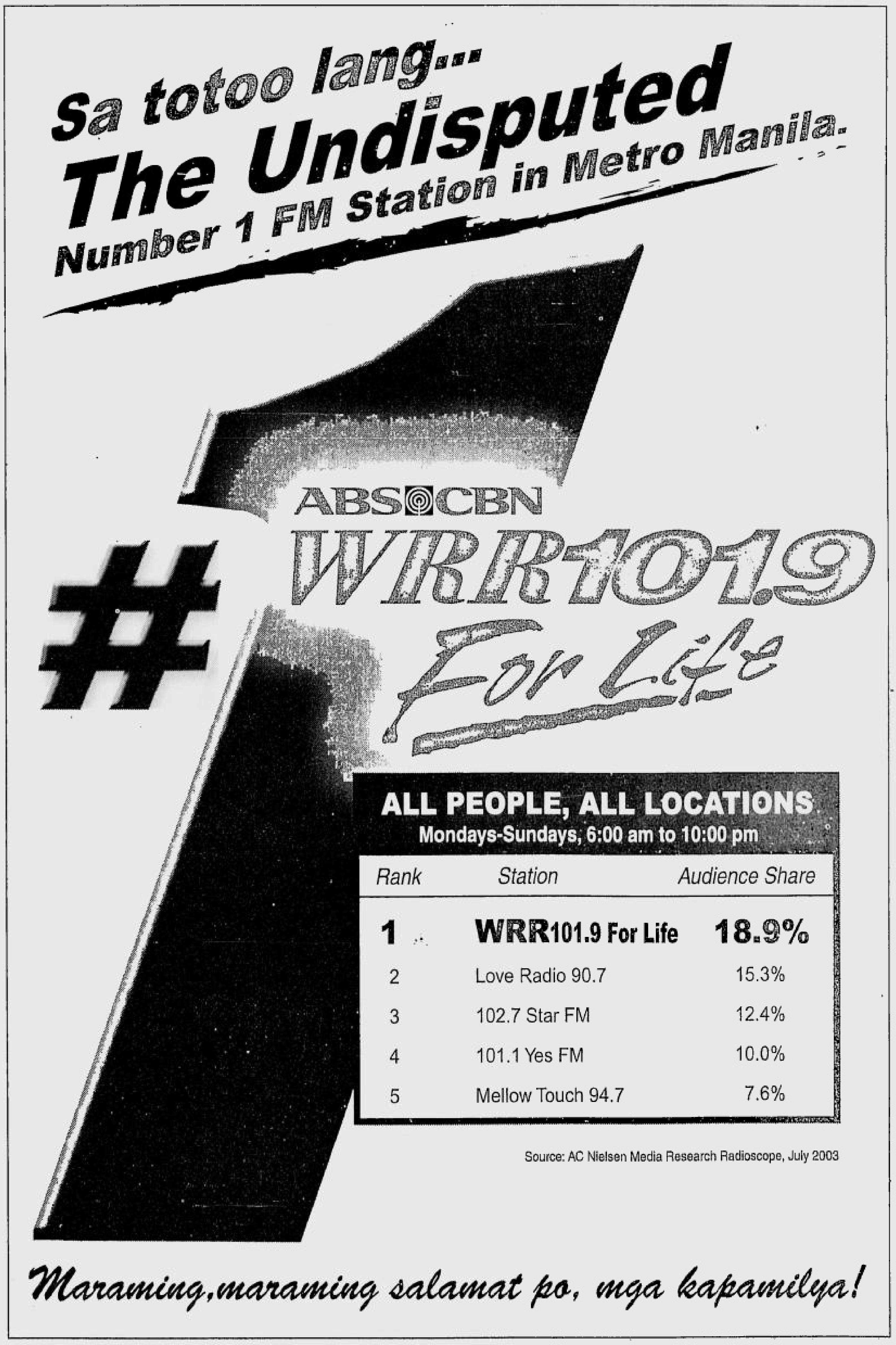

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3	102.7 Star FM	12.4%
4	101.1 Yes FM	10.0%
5	Mellow Touch 94.7	7.6%

Source: AC Nielsen Media Research Radioscope, July 2003
Maraming, maraming salamat po, mga kapamilya!

Hunts fill MTV's October

THE CLICHÉ that October is Halloween and "haunting" parties is not for MTV, which has set its own rules in celebrating it as the month of "hunts."

MTV hunts for models with killer looks, hot bodies and drop-dead gorgeous smiles in the 2003 MTV Fashionista Best Model Search.

Last year's winners of the search were Gilamarie, who bagged Best Model of the World—Best Asian Model, and Bim, who snatched the glorious title Best Model of the World—Prince Model of the World.

To qualify, you must be 18-25 years old, at least 5-foot-6 for females and at least 5-foot-9 for males.

Modeling experience is a big plus.

The finals of the 2003 MTV Fashionista Best Model Search will be held at the NBC Tent in Fort Bonifacio on Nov. 17 at 7:30 p.m. Robbie Carmona of Saga Events directs.

For details, call Saga Events, 725-8252, 723-3087, or MTV Philippines, 889-9251.

MTV Drumline is the search for the best drum and bugle corps and school band and is open to all high schools and colleges in Manila. The grand prize is P150,000.

To qualify, a group must have 25 male or female members. They must send their band profile and a demo tape with at least two songs to MTV Philippines, Unit C For Entertainment Center, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.

Also in October, MTV has VJ KC Concepcion's "KC in Da House," features on local hip hop's new prince, Jay-R, and the Lokal Artist of the Month, Rivermaya, plus the premiere of Blue's latest video, "Guilty," on Oct. 18.

SHOW TIME

Parokya, Moonstar at Outback

OUTBACK Restaurant's Libis branch recently played host to Myx's "Gig Night" featuring the bands Parokya ni Edgar and Moonstar 88.

Aside from performing, members of the bands posed and mingled with diners and fans after their performances.

The event also featured Lone Star Light's beer-drinking contest.

Outback Restaurant is known for its quality dishes served in an Aussie-inspired atmosphere.

Outback has branches in Glorietta 4 at the Ayala Center in Makati City, Libis in Quezon City and Alabang Town Center.

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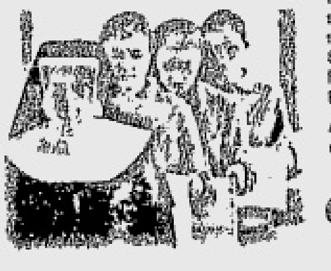
OPENS OCTOBER 8 AT ArtFilm
THE MAGDALENE SISTERS
"A fierce, brilliant film."
Michael Wilmington, CHICAGO TRIBUNE
The film which won the Golden Lion at Venice & Discovery Award at the Toronto Film Festival, is based on the real-life story of thousands of young women who because they were rootless or suspected of dallying with men, were into hard labor at convents, literally washing away their sins for the Irish Catholic Church. The film's electrifying opening sequences shows three protagonists falling into the clutches of the Sisters of Mercy: There's Margaret, raped by her cousin at a wedding, Rose, who gives birth to an illegitimate child, and gorgeous, sulky Bernadette whose only crime is flirting with boys.
A truly fresh, strong & inspiring masterpiece by acclaimed Scottish director Peter Mullan.
COFFEE CLUB DISCUSSION ON "THE MAGDALENE SISTERS" on Oct. 8 at 7pm
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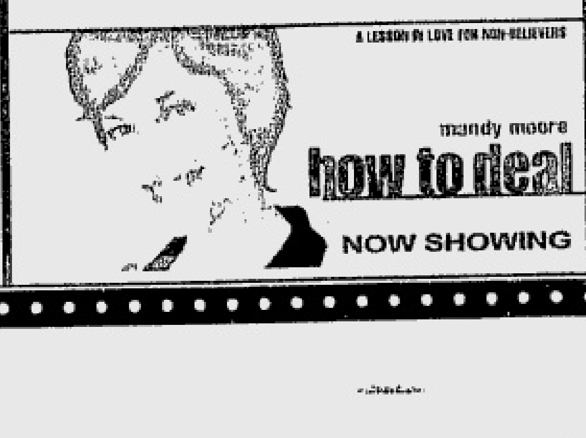

A LESSON IN LOVE FOR NON-BELIEVERS
mandy moore
how to deal
NOW SHOWING

'Nowhere in Africa' strikes close to home

By Peachy Vibal-Guioguio
Contributor

REVIEW

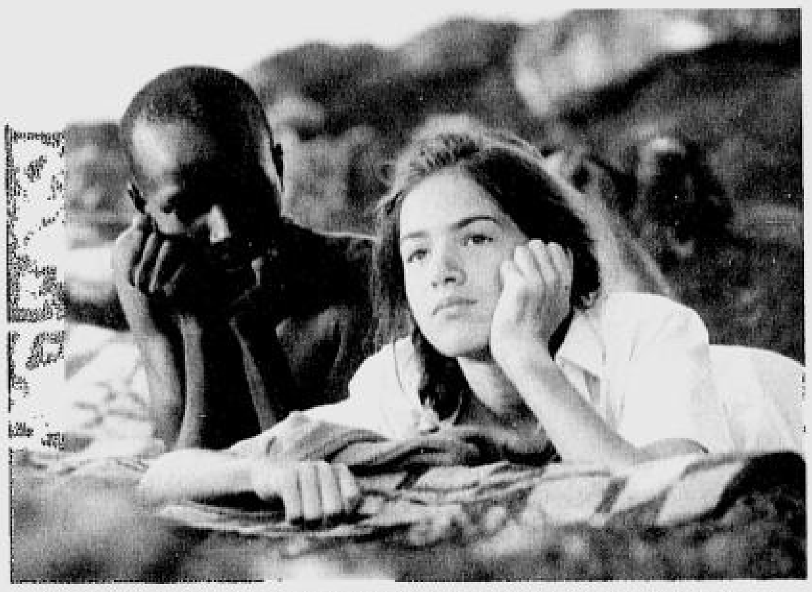
GIVEN the choice between reading a good book and watching a movie, I would rather read.

But one rainy weekday, in between two appointments in the same area, I decided to check out the movie schedules to kill time.

The thought of going inside the movie theater alone made me think twice. But it was either chucking my hard-earned cash on senseless and impulsive shopping, which I normally do alone, or spending a hundred pesos in a movie theater by myself, which I haven't done in my life.

The practical side of me won out. I bought a ticket and went inside an almost-empty theater.

"Nowhere in Africa" is based on the best-selling autobiographical novel of Stefanie Zweig. The movie, which won the 2002 Academy Award for best foreign language film, follows the travails of a young Jewish family from Germany as it adapts to a new lifestyle in Kenya after fleeing from the Nazi regime at the onset of World War II. The movie is a Holocaust film but it is far from being yet another war epic. It focuses on the members of the Redlich family—Walter (Georgian actor Merab Ninidze), Jettel (Julianne Kohler) and their daughter Regina (Leah Kurka as a child and Karoline Eckertx as an adolescent)—and their relationship with one another as well as with their African cook, Owuor (Sidede Onyulo).



LOVE AND WAR. A German girl and an African cook form an unlikely friendship.

Used to living a comfortable life in Germany, Jettel finds it difficult to adjust to her new surroundings. After Walter, who had gone ahead of his family to Kenya, wrote to ask her to bring a refrigerator, Jettel instead packs their crates with fine China and spends their money on a fancy dress. Clearly, Jettel's affection for her husband is already waning. Instead of spending their first night together, she wards off his sexual advances and instead picks a fight with him.

Affecting bond

Their daughter, Regina, immediately embraces the foreign country and is the first to bond with the Africans, especially with the nurturing cook Owuor. The young actress' refreshingly innocent portrayal of a daughter who must cope with the diminishing love of her parents for each other makes me wish for all children of troubled parents to be well adjusted like her. Regina finds solace in the company of Owuor who is very kind to her, teaches her to cook, introduces her to the Pokot children and even gifts her with a young goat for a pet.

Their deeply affecting bond strikes close to home. I remember the house helps I grew up with, who, like Owuor, left me with many memories that have been very much part of my life.

When war breaks out, Walter is incarcerated with other German men while Jettel and Regina are billeted in Nairobi's posh hotel. The parting scene between Regina and Owuor, with the former leaving a trail of cards for the cook so he could follow them, leaves a lump in my throat.

As the war rages on the other side of the world, the trio's relationships with their strange environment become increasingly complicated. Jettel grows more self-assured, Regina more attached to her new life, and Walter more haunted by the life they left behind.

Loving more

Director Caroline Link has created a visually compelling movie that treats the viewer to shots of an expanse variety of nature, the voluptuous green coffee and tea plantation, the arid savannas and rolling hills, and the safaris. The images that Link shows are enough to make you want to board the next plane to Africa.

The fabulous soundtrack, which is another reason why you should not miss this film, is a lovely combination of European and African music. The theme is quiet, reminiscent of the theme from "The English Patient," and there is a quiet bit of mellow African percussion and chanting.

One of the lines that struck me in this film was in the conversation between Jettel and the father of Walter before the former joined her husband in Kenya. "In every relationship," she says, "someone is bound to love more. And that person who loves more, becomes more vulnerable."

In the face of the breakup between two members of Philippine show business that has been the talk of the country for many days now, I can't help but agree with Jettel. For the first time, a well-known, well-educated and wealthy celebrity has come forward to tell the whole world how vulnerable she is.

DID YOU KNOW...

Actress **Lorna Tolentino** donated some clothes to her "Kay Tagal Kang Hinintay" co-star, **Jean Garcia**, whose rented house in Greenhills, San Juan was gutted by fire earlier in September. Jean now lives in New Manila, Quezon City. Lorna T plays twins in "Kay Tagal," while Jean is the villain, Lady Morgana.

CULLUM, BBC's "Rising Star"

Jamie Cullum, so young, so talented

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

REVIEW

JAMIE Cullum is often referred to as "Sinatra in sneakers," perhaps because he is only 23. But Cullum packs his music with attitude that certainly would have caught the attention of Ole Blue Eyes himself.

Cullum's music immediately reels you in from the first notes of the irresistible piano hook he uses in his take on "You and the Night and the Music," the first of the 13 tracks in his debut album, "Pointless Nostalgic," recorded in 2001 and produced by London-based Candid Records.

The young British pianist, singer, arranger and composer then effectively conveys his sense of longing and angst in his interpretation of the Vernon Duke and Ira Gershwin classic "I Can't Get Started."

Cullum easily moves from the classics, including "Devil May Care," "You're Nobody Till Somebody Loves You" and "In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning," to his own compositions, "Pointless Nostalgic," co-written by his elder brother, Ben, who is also his musical idol, and the sarcastic "I Want to be a Pop Star" and some modern songs such as the Radiohead original "High and Dry."

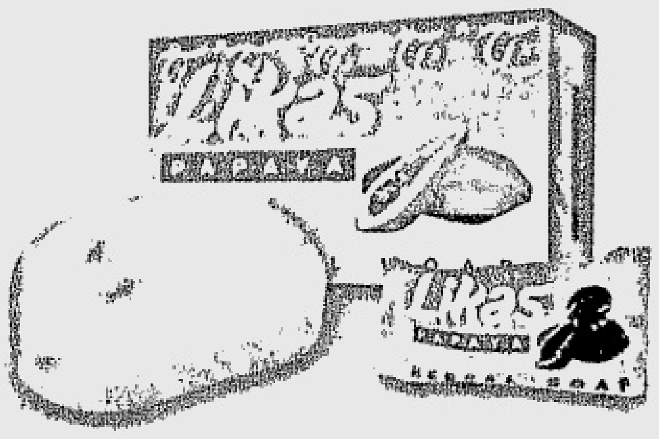
While a growing number of young artists, such as Michael Bublé and Robbie Williams, have effectively brought back the classic songs from the era of the Rat Pack to a whole new audience, Cullum is a cut above them because he not only sings, which he does very well. He also arranged almost all of the tracks in the album, except for "Devil May Care," "Too Close for Comfort" and "Looking Good."

Cullum played piano on all tracks.

And he has proven that he is more than just a pretty face when he was recognized during the 2003 BBC Jazz Awards in the "Rising Star" category. His debut album reached the second highest spot (next to Norah Jones) even before the winners of the BBC Jazz Awards were named last July 29 in London.

"Pointless Nostalgic," which is also how Cullum describes himself, is a daring album. But then, Cullum has always been one for experimentation, and he is equally comfortable playing jazz as he is playing grunge and heavy metal. He also plays rock before thousands at

JAMIE/ A29



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ENTERTAINMENT

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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

New group represents small workers

By Marinel R. Cruz

A GROUP of filmmakers, actors, theater owners and small workers in show business has been formed to try to represent the entertainment industry in the lawmaking process.

The groups comprise the Asosasyon ng Manggagawa ng Pelikulang Pilipino, which seeks to be a party-list group as well as provide medical and educational assistance to its poor members.

However, the Asosasyon failed to meet the Sept. 30 deadline set by the Commission on Elections for the filing of the certificates of candidacy for party-list groups. The new group will have to wait for the 2007 election.

Lawyer Espiridion Laxa, who is also head of the Film Academy of the Philippines, leads the group.

Manny Nuqui, vice president for operations of the Asosasyon, explained that the group did not meet the Comelec deadline because of unfinished paperwork.

But he said the Asosasyon would still proceed with carrying out its goal of providing medical and educational assistance as well as social security benefits to its members.

The Asosasyon members are from the acting field, including stuntmen and character actors, as well as from the labor sector like propsmen, set designers, special effects men, makeup artists and technical staff members.

The group also hopes to represent the distribution sector, which consists of theater owners, film bookers and shippers, as well as mall employees like theater janitors, porters and ticket sellers.

"We are also considering inviting contractual employees in television," Nuqui yesterday told INQUIRER Entertainment. "These employees have families who depend on their small earnings."

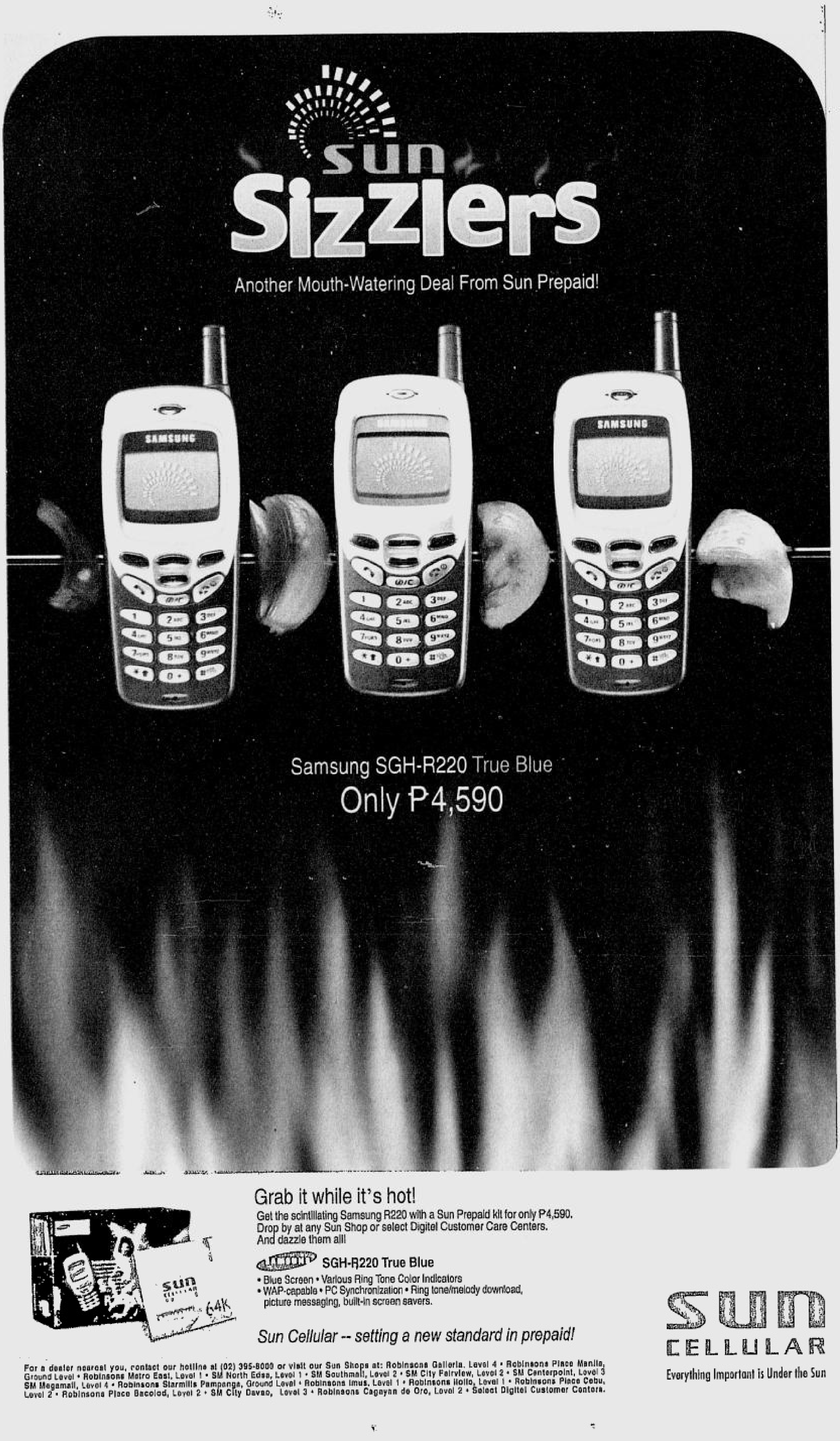
Nuqui said the group would work hand in hand with the government-sponsored Movie Workers Welfare Foundation (Mowelfund) in giving benefits to sick Mowelfund members.

"The Mowelfund cannot do it on its own," he said. "Last year, the Office of the President issued a directive taking away almost 75 percent of its budget. Besides, the foundation can only welcome a limited number of members."

Nuqui added that the Asosasyon, under the supervision of the Film Academy of the Philippines (FAP), has been sending the children of some of its members to computer schools.

He said the group would also shoulder the social security contributions of its members who are contractual employees.

Butch Bautista is AMPP president. Rick Camaligan is vice president for administration. Like Nuqui, comedian and FAP president Leo Martinez is also a member of the AMPP board.



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MCCARTNEYS VS MINEFIELDS
Paul McCartney and his wife, Heather Mills McCartney, attend the 3rd Annual Adopt-A-Minefield benefit in Los Angeles. The McCartneys hosted the event, which raises money to clear minefields and provides aid to people injured by landmines. AP

Rock concert to feature onstage suicide

TAMPA, Florida—A rock group said Monday it will go ahead with an onstage suicide during a concert in Florida this weekend, in defiance of a new city law designed to scuttle the plan.

The hard-rock band Hell on Earth has said a suicide by a terminally ill person would take place during a concert Saturday in the city of St. Petersburg to raise awareness of right-to-die issues.

Earlier Monday, the city council unanimously approved an emergency ordinance making it illegal to conduct a suicide for commercial or entertainment purposes, and to host, promote and sell tickets for such an event.

"While I still think it's a publicity stunt, we still couldn't sit idly by and let somebody lose their life," said council member Bill Foster.

Circuit Judge John C. Lenderman of St. Petersburg granted the city a temporary injunction against the band Monday, preventing them from advertising the show and allowing the suicide. The judge scheduled a hearing in the case Thursday.

But band leader Billy Tourtelot was defiant. "The show will go on," he said.

Tourtelot, 33, said the concert will be played before a "a select few people" at an undisclosed location in St. Petersburg and will be shown live on the band's website. He wouldn't disclose any details about the terminally ill person or say how the person planned to kill himself.

The Tampa-based band, known for such outrageous onstage stunts as chocolate syrup wrestling and grinding up live rats in a blender, created the furor by announcing the suicide would happen Saturday at the State Theater in downtown St. Petersburg.

But the theater's owner, David Hundley, promptly canceled the band's show, and another venue also turned away the event.

Tourtelot said the band was aiming to raise awareness that physician-assisted suicide should be legalized in Florida.

"If you can die for your country, why can't you die for yourself?" he asked.

Tourtelot said he is not worried about any legal ramifications. Violating the city ordinance is punishable with up to 60 days in jail and a $500 fine. *AP*

BUSINESS

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph
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WARY ABOUT RP

ADB remains bullish on Asia

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE OUTBREAK of the killer virus SARS this year had cost Asia's developing countries about $18 billion in lost domestic income, but the region is still expected to remain as the fastest growing in the world, the Asian Development Bank said yesterday.

Presenting the bank's latest Asian Development Outlook for 2003, ADB chief economist Ifzal Ali said the bank was expecting a growth rate of 5.3 percent this year and 6.1 percent next year for developing Asia, which he noted was "remarkable" despite the shocks that hit the region in the first semester.

"Developing Asia's performance so far in 2003—on which our new growth forecasts are based—demonstrates that this region will continue to remain a bright spot in the world economic map. The resilience with which this region has faced economic turbulence in the past as well as in 2003 attests to the pragmatism of policy formulation and implementation," the economist said.

Aside from the SARS outbreak whose epicenter was China, the region was likewise hounded by uncertainties linked to the conflict in Iraq, higher global oil prices, slowdown in industrial country growth as well as regional terrorist threats.

For 2003, the ADB maintained the same GDP growth forecast for the Philippines (4 percent), Indonesia (3.4 percent) and Malaysia (4.1 percent) compared with the last outlook released in April.

"While consumption in these countries was strong in the first half of 2003, investment was weak and net exports were negative for the Philippines," he said.

On the other hand, the bank raised its forecast for China (7.8 from 7.3 percent) and Thailand (6 percent from 5 percent) and maintained high growth forecasts for India (6 percent) and Vietnam (6.9 percent).

Meanwhile, the bank scaled down its outlook for Korea to 3.1 percent from 4 percent and Singapore, to 0.5 percent from 2.3 percent, noting that consumption and investment had greatly weakened in both countries.

For Southeast Asia alone, growth is projected at 3.9 percent or almost unchanged from the bank's earlier forecast of 4 percent.

Looking ahead, the ADB said it had increased its growth forecast for developing Asia for next year to 6.1 percent from 5.9 percent.

"This reflects a stronger performance of the PRC (People's Republic of China) economy as well as significant improvements in Hong Kong, China, Singapore and Thailand," Ali said.

The bank, however, warned that growing fiscal deficits—especially among the countries hit by the financial crisis—was worrisome as this could crowd out

ADB / B2

Moody's downgrades outlook for 6 RP banks

MOODY'S Investors Service has revised the rating outlook to negative from stable for six Philippine banks: Bank of the Philippine Islands, Development Bank of the Philippines, Equitable-PCI Bank, Land Bank of the Philippines, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. and Philippine National Bank.

Moody's said, however, that the not-prime short-term deposit and the bank financial strength ratings of all six banks were unaffected.

This action followed the change in Moody's outlook to negative for the Philippine country ceiling—Ba1 foreign currency long-term debt and Ba2 foreign currency bank deposits.

Moody's said the stable outlook for all the ratings of Allied Banking Corp., Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and United Coconut Planters Bank were unaffected.

MOODY'S / B2

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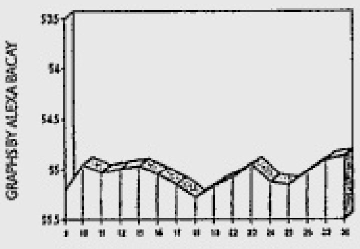


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱54.87 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Sept. 30, 2003

¥110.48 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Sept. 30, 2003

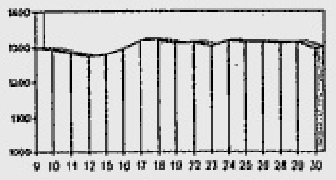
GOLD: $383.80-384.30
per ounce Hong Kong, Sept. 30, 2003

September 30, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.862218	1.000000	54.942000
Japan	Yen	0.007785	0.009029	0.496100
United Kingdom	Pound	1.437748	1.667500	91.615800
Hongkong	Dollar	0.111225	0.128999	7.087500
Switzerland	Franc	0.650632	0.754603	41.459400
Canada	Dollar	0.637452	0.739317	40.619600
Singapore	Dollar	0.498392	0.578035	31.758400
Australia	Dollar	0.581480	0.674400	37.052900
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.287110	2.652590	145.738600
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.229925	0.266667	14.651200
Brunei	Dollar	0.496956	0.576369	31.666900
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000103	0.000119	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.021550	0.024994	1.373200
UAE	Dirham	0.234771	0.272287	14.960000
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.159800	63.721700
ArgentinaPeso	0.296805	0.344234	18.912900	
Brazil	REAL	0.293670	0.340599	18.713200
Denmark	Kroner	0.134640	0.156155	8.579500
India	Rupee	0.018846	0.021858	1.200900
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.226930	0.263193	14.460300
Mexico	New Peso	0.078590	0.091149	5.007900
New Zealand	Dollar	0.509133	0.590493	32.442900
Norway	Kroner	0.122837	0.142466	7.827400
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014930	0.017316	0.951400
South Africa	Rand	0.121162	0.140524	7.720700
Korea	Won	0.000749	0.000869	0.047700
Sweden	Kroner	0.112175	0.130100	7.148000
Syria	Pound	0.020529	0.023810	1.308200
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025592	0.029682	1.630800
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000541	0.000627	0.034400

STOCK MARKET

Moody's downgrade weighs down stocks

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX
SEPTEMBER



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES closed lower for the fourth straight session yesterday, weighed down after Moody's Investors Service cut its Philippine rating outlook to negative from stable.

But traders said bargain-hunting may emerge in the coming days, with some blue chip stocks ripe for accumulation.

The Philippine stock index lost 12.94 points or 0.99 percent to 1,297.42 points. It lost 1.6 percent in the four sessions to yesterday, but is up 27.4 percent so far this year.

"The market continues to hover around 1,300 and the direction in the next few days will be dependent on the government's preparations for the elections, if the president is running or not," said Oliver Plana, head of sales at Asiasec Equities Inc.

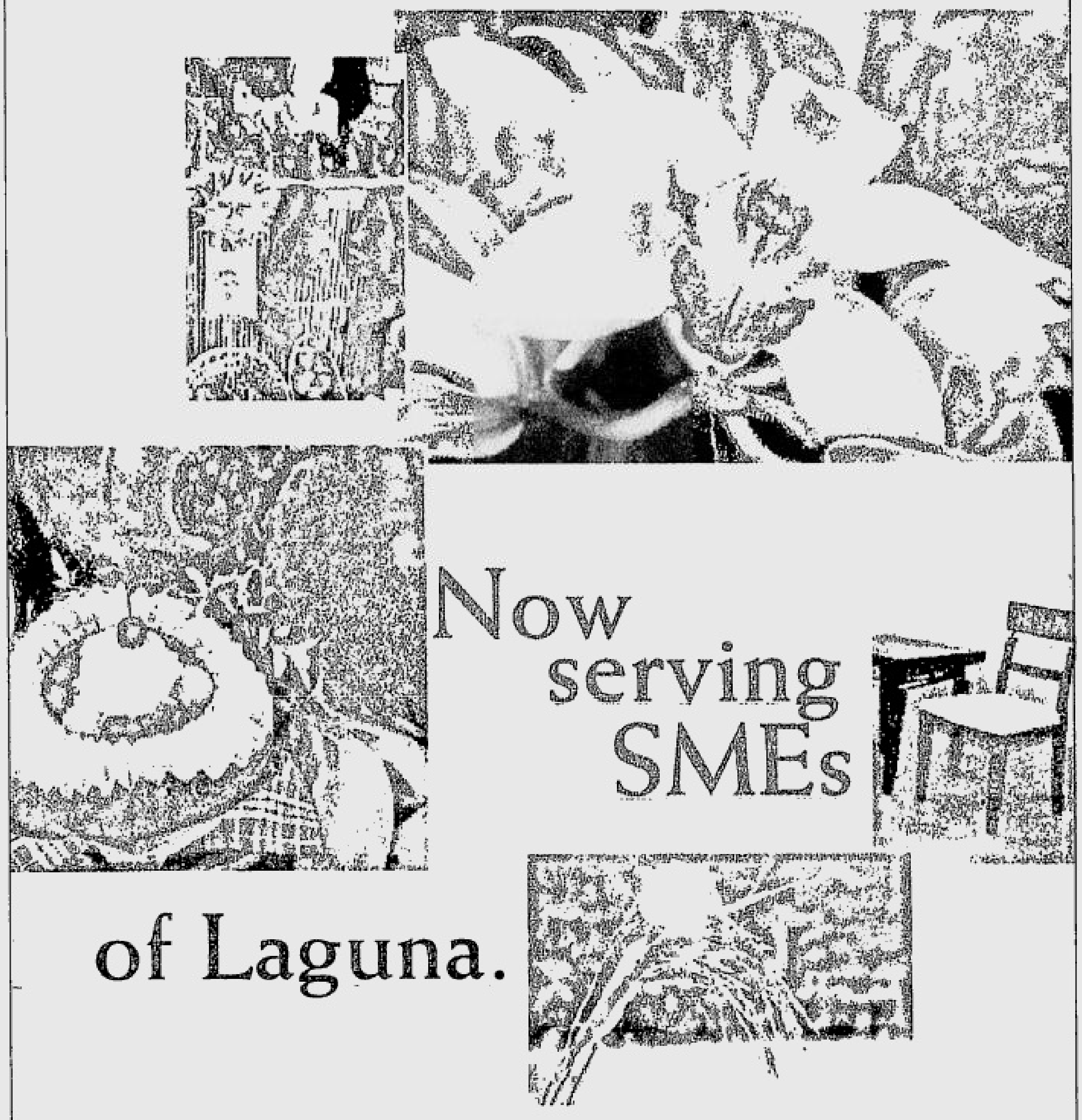
President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is widely expected to change course after saying last year she would not stand in the 2004 presidential polls, but investors said her failure to clarify her intentions was raising uncertainty.

Moody's said in a statement that recent political developments, including a failed coup attempt on July 27 and a court ruling suspending the central bank chief "reflect deep political tensions," with risks rising ahead of the May election.

Market turnover climbed to P385.17 million from P291.9 million on Monday. Losers outpaced gainers, 38 to 21, with 41 issues unchanged.

Reuters

Plantersbank.



Plantersbank acquires The Region Bank (Los Baños Rural Bank, Inc.), expanding its reach and extending its services to more Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Laguna and the rest of the Calabarzon area.

This expansion brings Plantersbank's nationwide network to 70 branches, increasing its total resources to ₱27 Billion.

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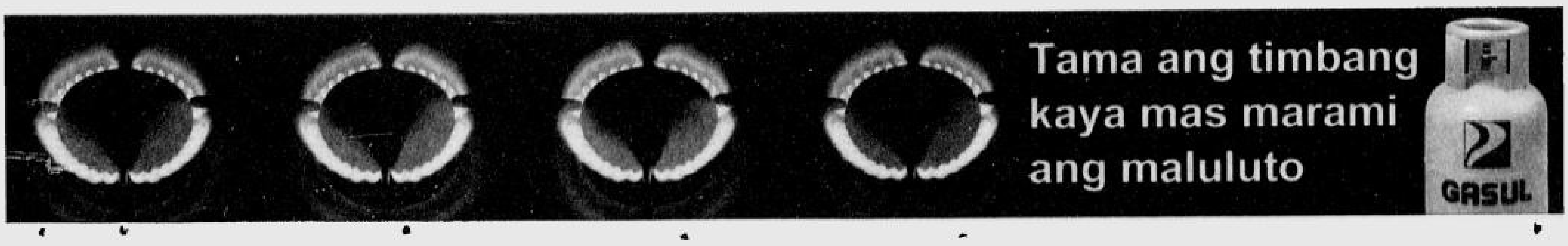


Former brokers, bankers eyed to replace PSE prexy in 2004

MORE names are emerging as possible candidates for president of the Philippine Stock Exchange to replace incumbent Ernest Leung, who will not seek a renewal of his contract when it expires in end-February next year.

Industry sources said former Banco Santander Philippines president Vicente Castillo, PSE director and banker Peter Favila and former finance undersecretary Romeo Bernardo were being recommended by some groups for the position.

Earlier reports said that former JP Morgan Securities Philippines Inc. nominee to the PSE Conrado Bate, former PSE corporate secretary Francisco Villaroman and former broker Antonio Garcia were also being considered.

A PSE source said that Bate and Castillo were generally acceptable to brokers but Villaroman and Favila were likely to face rough sailing.

Villaroman reportedly was "hard to get along with" while Favila has alienated the group of broker Robert Coyiuto. In a deciding vote, Favila favored Vivian Yuchengco for PSE chair last year over Coyiuto.

A PSE source said that Castillo "has the network, expertise and respect" of brokers. "He has the management expertise in this kind of business."

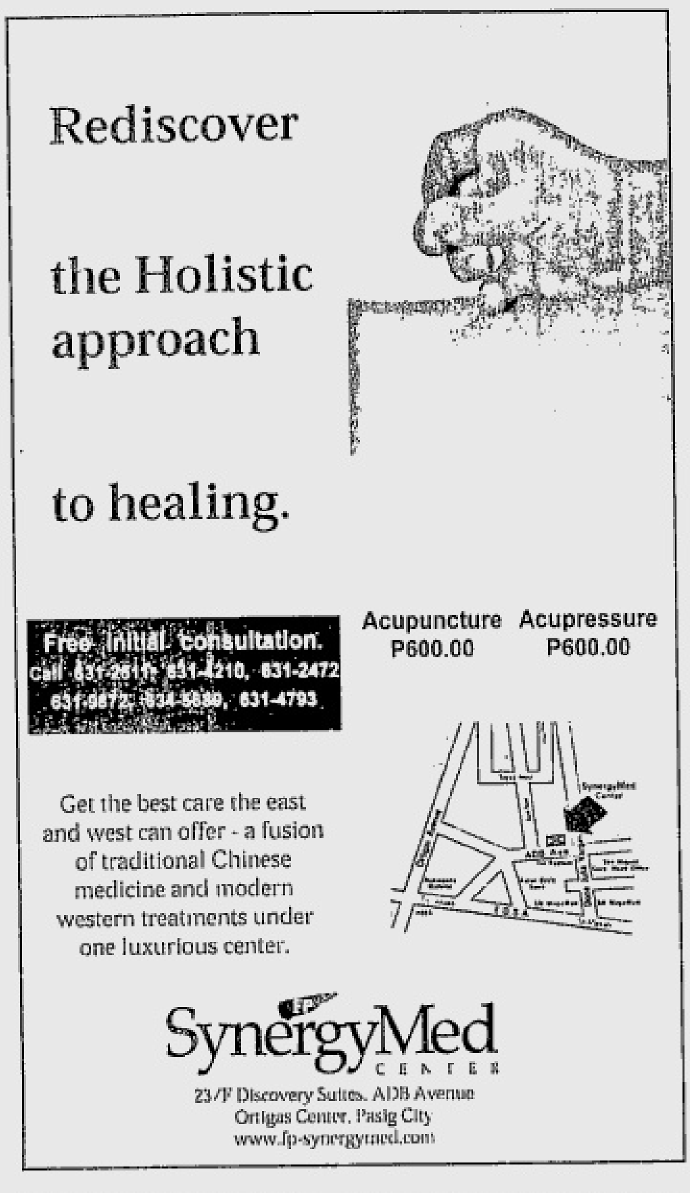
Bate, on the other hand, is the apparent favorite at this point as he is seen to be well-qualified for the post of PSE president and well-liked by brokers.

Meanwhile, Bernardo was reportedly not interested in the PSE post.

If they do run for PSE president, those who have been connected with a brokerage house in the past two years would have to get an exemption from the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Under the Securities Regulation Code, the PSE president must also qualify as an independent director who has not been a broker for the past two years.

Leung, who used to be chair of DBP Daiwa Securities, was also granted by the SEC an exemption so he could assume his post as PSE president. *Elena R. Torrijos*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IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION
FOR THE REMOVAL AND EXCLUSION OF
THE CROSS SUBSIDY CHARGES/RATES

ERC CASE NO. 2003-285

NATIONAL TRANSMISSION
CORPORATION (TRANSCO),
Applicant,
x--x

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given of the filing of an "Application" on May 12, 2003 by applicant National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO) for the removal and exclusion of the Intra-Regional Grid Cross Subsidy (IRGCS) charge in its rates/rate schedule, with prayer for provisional authority, docketed as ERC Case No. 2003-285.

The Commission has set the next hearing of the case on October 23, 2003 at nine o'clock (9:00 a.m.) in the morning at the ERC Hearing Room, 15th Floor, Pacific Center Building, San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City.

All interested parties who may wish to comment on or oppose the said application should file their comments and/or oppositions on or before the date of hearing. Such parties who may wish to have the details of the application and who shall have manifested to the Commission their desire and intention to participate actively in the proceedings, may request that before the date of hearing, they be furnished with copies of the application by the applicant, which is hereby directed to furnish the parties making such request with copies of the application and its attachments. Likewise, any such interested party may examine the application and other pertinent records filed with the Commission during the usual office hours.

WITNESS, the Honorable Chairman, **MANUEL R. SANCHEZ** and the Honorables **MARY ANNE B. COLAYCO, OLIVER B. BUTALID, CARLOS R. ALINDADA**, and **LETICIA V. IBAY**, Commissioners, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 10th day of September, 2003 at Pasig City.

(Sgd.) **FRUCTUOSO O. LAGUNZAD, JR.**
Executive Director III

(PDI - Sept. 24 & Oct. 1, 2003)

RCBC Savings to get ₱300-M equity infusion

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp., a publicly listed universal bank largely owned by the Yuchengco family, will infuse P300 million in fresh capital into its subsidiary, RCBC Savings Bank, to boost the latter's lending capacity.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, RCBC said the board-approved infusion would be subject to the go-ahead of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

RCBC corporate planning head and chief information officer Cynthia Santos said the infusion was also in response to the BSP directive requiring not only commercial banks but the banks' subsidiaries to have a minimum 10-percent capital adequacy ratio.

While RCBC Savings already has a ratio of more than 10 percent, the additional P300 million in equity would allow it to continue to increase its lending.

The thrift bank acts as the consumer lending arm of RCBC.

Santos noted that RCBC Savings, which has about 130 branches, has been doing very well and has seen substantial growth in auto, housing and salary loans.

She also said RCBC may also consider infusing additional capital into its investment house, RCBC Capital. *Elena R. Torrijos*

ADB allots new loan fund to invest in SPAVs

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ASIAN Development Bank plans to invest in special purpose asset vehicles (SPAVs) that will help Philippine banks clean up their portfolio using part of a $200-million loan facility recently opened for the private sector.

ADB country director for the Philippines Thomas Crouch told reporters yesterday that the bank could use the facility to help restructure the bank sector.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas earlier approved a swap of a $200-million facility opened by the ADB with local currency, for disbursement to development projects spearheaded by the private sector.

Asked how much the ADB could earmark to SPAVs, Crouch said the bank had a limit of $25 million or 25 percent of total project cost for each project.

The $200-million facility is a 12-year peso-denominated lending window that aims to give local companies access to long-term funds, thus helping them avoid the currency mismatch that hit a lot of companies during the Asian crisis.

Since the SPAV law was passed early this year, Crouch noted that the opportunities made available had not been exploited by the banking sector.

The SPAV law was supposed to address the non-performing asset problems of the financial sector and encourage private sector investments by eliminating the existing barriers in the purchase of non-performing loans (NPLs).

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Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,150,000	1,200,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,200,000	1,300,000
Baguio Country Club	600,000	680,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"		60,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	60,000	
Camp John Hay	250,000	280,000
Canlubang	450,000	550,000
Canyonwoods		150,000
Capitol Hills	150,000	160,000
Cebu Country Club	1,200,000	1,700,000
Celebrity Sports Club	180,000	200,000
Club Filipino	150,000	175,000
Evercrest "A"		80,000
Forest Hills "A"	175,000	200,000
Forest Hills "B"		250,000
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	275,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	200,000	240,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	250,000	300,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	11,000,000	12,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,000,000	10,300,000
Manila Polo	2,250,000	2,300,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	400,000	450,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	550,000	600,000
Manila Yacht Club		450,000
Metropolitan Club "A"		100,000
Mimosa (Individual)	100,000	140,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	250,000	275,000
Montemar (Individual)	30,000	35,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	170,000	275,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"		600,000
Puerto Azul		100,000
Quezon City Sports Club	140,000	175,000
Rockwell		380,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	60,000	80,000
Sherwood Hills "B"		180,000
Sherwood Hills "C"		180,000
Spa & Lodge	520,000	700,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,000,000	1,300,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)		220,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)		120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	350,000	400,000
Tagaytay Highlands	800,000	850,000
Tagaytay Midlands	600,000	700,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	140,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	200,000	
Valley Golf	250,000	270,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,000,000	7,100,000

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Moody's . . .

From page B1

It said the outlooks for the following ratings were revised to negative: BPI's long-term deposit rating of Ba2; DBP's long-term deposit rating of Ba2; Equitable PCI's subordinated debt rating of Ba1 and long-term deposit rating Ba2; Land Bank's long-term deposit rating of Ba2; Metrobank's subordinated debt rating of Ba1 and long-term deposit rating of Ba2, and PNB's senior debt rating of Ba1 and long-term deposit rating of Ba2.

Moody's also revised the outlook of National Power Corp.'s Ba1 debt ratings to negative from stable following its decision to change the outlook to negative for the Philippines' ratings.

Napocor's Ba1 rating reflected the Philippine government's unconditional and irrevocable guarantee for its rated senior unsecured debts. Napocor is a wholly owned government corporation and is the principal generation and sole transmission company in the Philippines.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Sept. 30, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	5,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	17.75	17.25	17.5	47,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43.5	43.5	42.5	43	520,800
China Banking Corp.	660	660	660	660	740
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	33.5	33.5	32	32	227,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	29	29.5	29	29	434,300
Philippine National Bank	25	25	25	25	17,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	13,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	29.5	30	29.5	30	161,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Filipino Fund Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	1,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1625	1625	1625	1625	10
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	221,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1200	1200	1170	1175	1,740
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	24	24.5	24	24.25	9,400
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.69	0.7	0.68	0.7	2,970,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	690	695	690	695	19,150
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.047	0.048	12,400,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.048	0.049	0.046	0.048	20,900,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.76	0.76	0.73	0.73	7,770,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	650	650	640	640	162,330
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	10,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.5	15.5	14.75	14.75	273,800
Manila Electric Co. B	23.5	23.75	22.75	22.75	542,500
Petron Corp.	2	2.02	1.98	2	1,165,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.28	2.28	1,000
Trans-Asia Oil And Energy	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	128,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	2.48	2.5	2.48	2.5	143,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	200,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	3,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	31	30	30.5	15,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.5	211,300
RFM Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	40,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	60,000
San Miguel Corp. A	54	54.5	54	54.5	98,800
San Miguel Corp. B	62.5	63	62.5	63	366,500
Universal Robina Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	38,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.32	0.26	0.32	120,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.85	4.85	1,574,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	1,130,000
Aio.Net Holdings Inc.	0.03	0.033	0.03	0.033	2,300,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	16,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	5,000
ATR Kim Eng Fin. Corp.	2.2	2.26	2.2	2.26	690,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.64	0.66	0.62	0.62	7,990,000
Basic Consolidated Inc	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	[illegible]
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	[illegible]
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.04	1	1	[illegible]
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	18.5	18.5	17.5	17.75	[illegible]
Global Equities Inc.	0.095	0.105	0.095	0.095	[illegible]
Ionics Inc.	1.74	1.76	1.66	1.68	[illegible]
J.G Summit Holdings Inc.	2	2.04	2	2.04	189,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.94	0.95	0.93	0.93	7,100,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	[illegible]	2,070,000
Music Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	1,200,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.27	470,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.13	0.14	[illegible]	[illegible]	650,000
Roxas Holdings Inc	1.02	1.02	[illegible]	[illegible]	1,428,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.28	0.3	[illegible]	[illegible]	310,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.6	2.6	[illegible]	[illegible]	42,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.25	0.25	[illegible]	0.25	400,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	[illegible]	50,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.57	[illegible]	550,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.48	0.49	0.46	[illegible]	140,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	100,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.37	0.42	0.37	0.4	5,440,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	220,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Abs-Cbn Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	24.5	24.75	24.25	24.25	435,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
Pldt 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,500
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	14,000,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	580	580	580	580	30
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.2	6.3	7,672,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	10,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.195	0.2	0.195	0.2	250,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.175	0.175	260,000
Elb Realty Developers Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	50,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	620,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.04	4,874,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	50,000
SM Development Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	30,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	5,754,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	100,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	5,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	1,720,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co B	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	250,000
Omico Corp.	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	14,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	5,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	140,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	10,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,000,000
Interport Res.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	8,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	7,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	4,000,000

ADB remains bullish . . .

From page B1

private investment.

"Financial sector restructuring, particularly banking reform, is still a work-in-progress that adversely affects lending to business. Various infrastructure, institutional, legal and policy constraints still weigh heavily on the investment climate in most countries of our region," Ali said.

"In addition, political uncertainties linked to upcoming national elections in many countries are probably dampening business investments. A revival in business investment in many countries is increasingly needed to raise long-term growth rates," he explained.

The Philippines, for one, is about to hold its presidential elections in May next year.

DISCLOSURES

ELECTED directors of **MIC Holdings Corp.** were Philip Juico, Arturo Diago Jr., Jose Feria Jr., Florentino Herrera III, Jose Periquet Jr., Enrique Teehankee and Omar Mendoza.

***

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. clarified that it has paid Davao City government franchise taxes covering the period of 1999 to 2003, including the P3.68 million required by the Supreme Court. But it is seeking reconsideration of the surcharges and interests of about P9.5 million imposed by the city government.

***

GOTESCO Land Inc. confirmed it is appealing the Securities and Exchange Commission's P50,000 fine for its failure to comply with the commission's reportorial requirements.

***

CADP Group Corp. announced its consolidated net income for the fiscal year ending June 2003 reached P199 million.

***

PHILIPPINE Savings Bank disclosed it is terminating its services as Stock Transfer and Paying Agent for Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. shares.

***

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp. disclosed the resignation of Yasuhiro Matsumoto as director. Koji Onozawa was elected to replace Matsumoto. Also, the bank will add P300 million in equity to the RCBC Savings Bank.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

INTEREST RATES

September 30, 2003
MART 1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 Sept. 30, 2003 (%)	MART1 Sept. 29, 2003 (%)
1 Month	6.2692	6.2946
3 Months	6.2692	6.2946
6 Months	7.1717	7.1213
1 Year	7.7231	8.1054
2 Years	9.1423	9.1533
3 Years	9.7467	9.7179
4 Years	10.2679	10.2117
5 Years	10.5467	10.5163
7 Years	11.1583	11.1417
10 Years	11.5583	11.5533
20 Years	12.0133	12.0089
25 Years	12.258	12.2893

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

PAL seeks 'real' RP-US open-skies agreement

By Abigail L. Ho

CITING several "inequities" in the country's 1982 air transport agreement with the United States, flag carrier Philippine Airlines Inc. is pushing for a "true and real open skies" agreement, which will eliminate all restrictions on destinations and capacity.

In a speech before the Rotary Club of Makati yesterday, PAL president and chief operating officer Avelino Zapanta said the only way the Philippines could get a fair deal under an air rights agreement with the United States was for skies of both countries to be completely unrestricted.

He said that under the 1982 agreement, Philippine carriers were restricted to only nine gateways in the United States while their American counterparts had access to any gateway in the country.

Also, he said Philippine carriers could carry passengers beyond the United States to only five countries, which were mostly low-revenue and low-volume South American destination.

"These are countries that have no commercial or trading affinity with the Philippines. But (the agreement) led to a windfall for US carriers. They got a gold mine while we got virtually nothing," he told the INQUIRER in an earlier interview.

He explained that US carriers, under the agreement, could carry passengers beyond the Philippines to virtually all countries in Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

Under true and real open skies, he said this setup would change as all restrictions on capacity, destinations and gateways would be lifted.

The 1982 air transport agreement between the US and the Philippines did not put any limitation on flight frequencies. However, a memorandum of agreement signed in 1995 put a cap on frequencies, limiting both countries' carriers to 36 flights a week.

This MOA was signed to give local carriers a chance to build up their businesses and enhance their competitiveness.

As this agreement was not amended when the air talks between the two countries bogged down in July, the 1982 provisions will take full effect and eliminate the cap on frequencies on the passenger side.

For "true and real open skies" to take effect, Zapanta said the US government must also be willing to open its domestic skies to Philippines carriers.

Small oil firms eye bigger market

INDEPENDENT oil firms are expected to corner 16 percent of the overall local petroleum market by the end of the year, an improvement from 14 percent last year, an industry expert said yesterday.

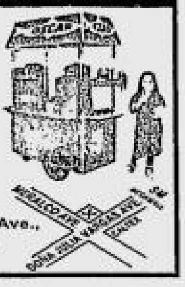
Ben-Hur Salcedo, executive director of the Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association, said that the "juniors" were also expected to service about 40 percent of the liquefied petroleum gas sector by the end of 2004 from 25 percent last year.

"There is definitely going to have an increase in the market share of the independents, the only question is by how much," Salcedo said.

Salcedo, a former energy undersecretary, said that the growth was due to the new players' competitive stance and the lower overhead cost of their operations.

"The independents conduct business with a grassroots approach, consumers can identify with them more easily than with the oil majors."

He said first quarter figures alone suggested a steady growth for the junior firms, which held 37.2 percent of the LPG market and 13.5 percent of the overall market. *Ronnel W. Domingo*



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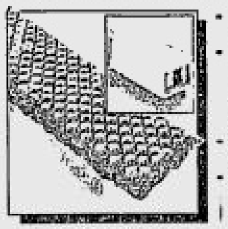

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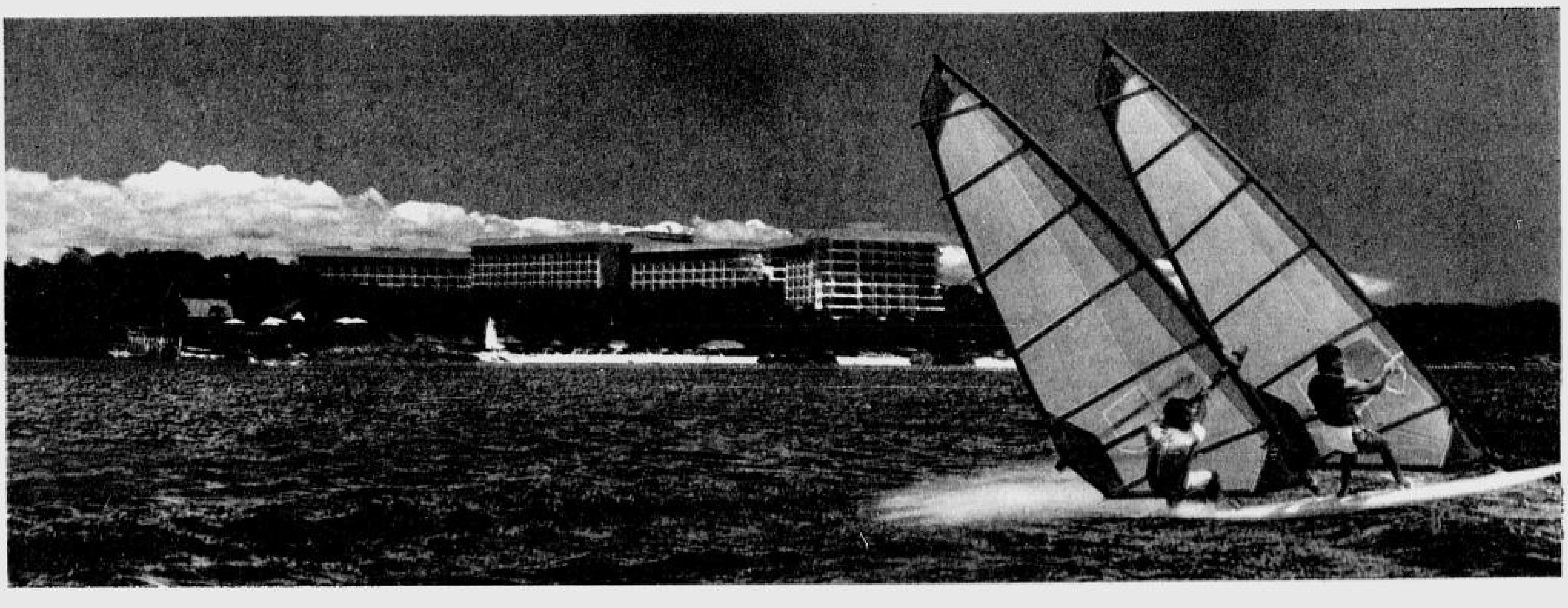

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PEOPLE at WORK

E-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

Pancit entrepreneur seeks secret of long life in business

By Gary B. Teves
President and CEO, Land Bank of the Philippines

ASK YOUR CEO

DEAR Sir:

I am a fresh graduate of a well-known university in the province where I took up a bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Actually, I shifted my course from BS Entrepreneurship in the same institution because I found no challenge in the course. I liked both courses because ever since I was a kid, I dreamt of having my own business similar to my family's own food business. I wish you could try our *pancit* specialty. Most of the restaurant owners here in our place try to sell the same kind of *pancit* (but they cannot match our quality, of course) for a lower price. This has alarmed me because I think that competition has a negative effect on our business based on what I have observed in our recent sales. However, my *lola*, the one who owns the main branch located in a strategic place inside the city, and my dad, were not able to anticipate the growing development around us.

In addition, just recently, our own small restaurant may soon close because we are not in good terms with the owner of the place—we are just renting. We have been given barely five days to look for another place.

I know we have a really big problem in managing the family business. I want to help improve our business, which is why I took and finished the appropriate course to become the family business' savior. But the problem is, I don't know how. Please help me because I know you have been through these kinds of situations and overcame obstacles successfully.

One more thing, can you also give me suggestions on where to get a financial boost even if I have no job yet? I believe it is one of the root causes why our business is suffering. There is lack of capital to be injected in the business. Most of our money is used to pay our debts, leaving our business hardly breaking even. I wish I could get some pointers from you. Thank you.

Respectfully yours,
Wheels

I've identified three main concerns in your letter: 1) convincing your grandmother and father to expand your business in order to be at par with your competitors in your area of operation; 2) how and where to avail of financing; and 3) how to effectively run your business.

Convincing your family

In order to convince your family of the merits of your plan, you must show them that you know what you are doing and that you have accurate and complete information.

First, you will need to come up with a cost estimate of all the expenses that you expect to incur for expanding your operation. The costs may initially alarm your grandmother and father, making them hesitant to implement any change. That's why you should also be prepared with as much information as possible on your business landscape, including your competitors, your markets, potential challenges, opportunities, etc.

For example, you can capitalize on the fact that your family has been in the food business for several years, and your *pancit* specialty has managed to build a loyal following. This shows good potential for expansion.

Financing

Approach financial institutions that cater to micro, small and medium enterprises. These include the Land Bank of the Philippines and the Development Bank of the Philippines, which strongly support the National Government's priority program for SMEs and micro enterprises.

SMEs and micro enterprises like you are considered the lifeblood of the country's economy, representing 99.6 percent of all registered establishments. SMEs are also major contributors to the creation of employment opportunities, and employ 69.9 percent of the labor force. Land Bank recognizes the significant role of SMEs in countryside development and provides financial assistance for working capital and business expansion, among others.

For loans below P500,000, you can approach countryside financial institutions (CFIs), e.g. rural banks and thrift banks, that offer loans to micro entrepreneurs. You can visit the Landbank Lending Center in your city and look for the officer-in-charge. He can give you a list of CFIs to consider for your financial needs (*email* rreyes@inquirer.com.ph *for his name*).

Another option is to ask the bank that handles your business's deposits, since they will be knowledgeable about your family and business operations. This long relationship will be highly advantageous when you obtain financing.

Business management

Studying business administration is a very good step to learn how to run your business effectively. Think about pursuing higher education at either your alma mater or other good business colleges and universities in your city.

You can also attend business seminars that will enhance your management skills and update you on current business trends. In addition, read and learn from the success stories of other entrepreneurs.

I hope this information is helpful and wish you the best of luck on your endeavor. May your *pancit* business go a long way!

(Our CEO columnists can answer requests for career advice through this column. Send your request by postal mail to the People at Work Editor, PDI Bldg., Chino Roces Ave., Makati City 1200 or email peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.*)*

CEO mentor Teves

PLDT whips up different kind of brew

By Candy G. Villanueva

ONCE again PLDT brings a whole new meaning to its old slogan, "touching lives." eXpresso, the brainchild of PLDT's Media and Corporate Communications Head, Butch Jimenez, is making an impact on the lives of people from all over the country and in many parts of the globe.

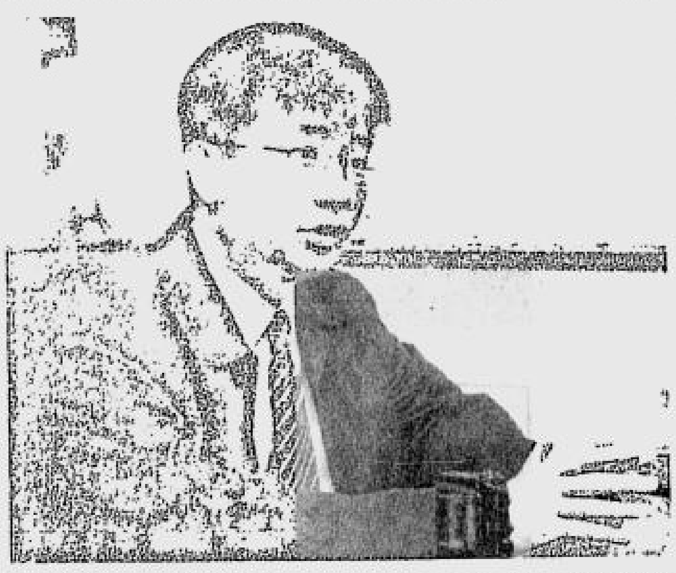
eXpresso is a one-page electronic newsletter that aims to promote strong leadership principles among PLDT employees. A project of the company's Leadership Circle campaign, eXpresso was developed to provide a quick "fix" of inspiration for the PLDT employees. The word "eXpresso" is a combination of "express" meaning fast, and "espresso" as a shot of inspiration. If people need their daily fixes of coffee to jump-start their day, eXpresso is intended to awaken the soul.

Quick sips for the soul

Forwarded junk mail often prompts us to automatically hit the delete button but eXpresso's bold graphics, short reads and witty and inspirational content may encourage you to take a second look. A one-page publication, the electronic newsletter is easy and quick to read. In fact, before you can gulp down your steaming cup of Batangas brew, you will find yourself at the end of the page, wishing for more.

Jimenez hopes to inspire and motivate people with eXpresso's quotes, anecdotes, fast facts, short stories, cartoons, thoughts on leadership and words of wisdom. To bring an element of surprise, these quick reads are sent to employees free via e-mail, without a set schedule.

Initially served January of 2003, eXpresso is not an unending sermon from your nagging granny. The content is witty and thought provoking with a little bit of something for everyone. Basketball fans for example will enjoy the Michael Jordan Series. Don't expect statistics though. The series will feature excerpts from his book "I Can't Accept Not Trying." Even the most non-athletic weakling can gain strength from the big man's quips like "I can accept failure. Everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying." Also, former campus geeks will appreciate Bill Gates' "Advice on Things Not Learned in School." His 9th rule states, "Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one."



BUTCH Jimenez, PLDT VP for media and corporate communications
PHOTO BY ROGER CARPIO

Brewed by Butch

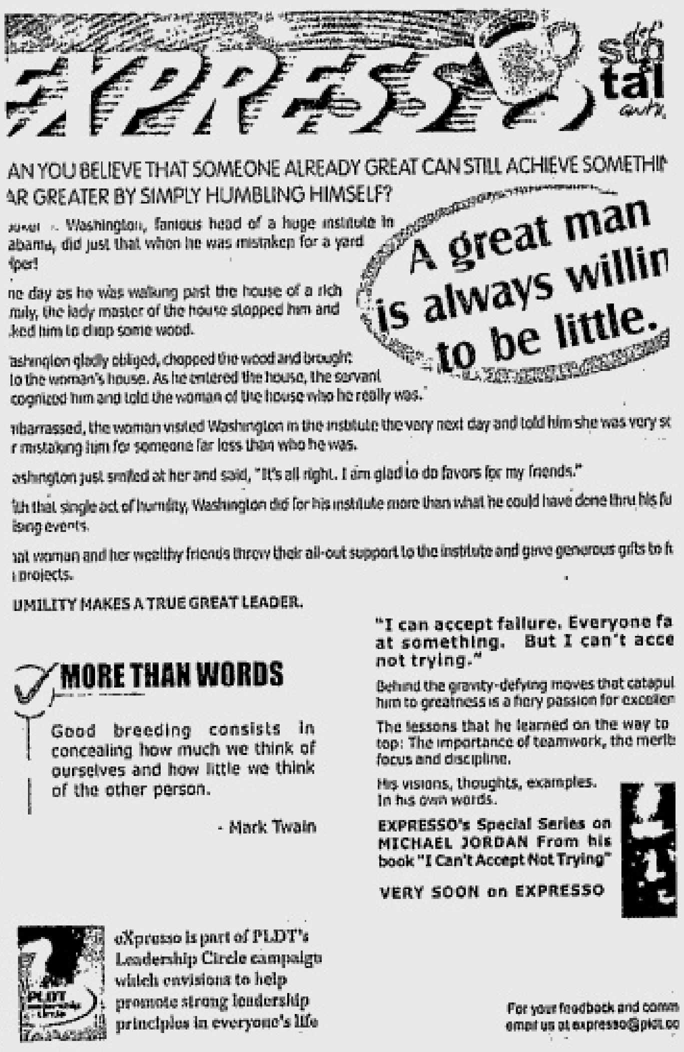
Immersed in film, television, radio and theater most of his adult life, Butch Jimenez, former head of GMA-7's Creative Services Department and producer of the movies, "Jose Rizal" and "Muro-Ami," dabbled in another form of medium, the Internet, to spread inspiration and hope. "Last year was quite turbulent for PLDT with all the strikes and the bruising corporate battle for control of the company," says Jimenez. "I felt that maybe there was something we could do to help boost morale, inspire employees, and push values that would last their whole lifetime."

Knowing full well that preaching and ramming information down the throats of employees wouldn't work, Jimenez took a more subtle and pleasant approach. "I felt that coming up with an electronic newsletter would be effective if it doesn't take much of their time, if it is laid out in a creative manner and if the articles themselves are both true and interesting."

Fusing these elements together, Jimenez hopes that "after reading eXpresso they get inspired, then get hooked, therefore ensuring that the succeeding articles are something that they will read again."

With a three-man team including Jimenez himself, the group sources out materials from books and from the Internet and often reformats these materials to fit eXpresso's layout. There is also a

PLDT/ B5



EXPRESSO
tal

AN YOU BELIEVE THAT SOMEONE ALREADY GREAT CAN STILL ACHIEVE SOMETHI
AR GREATER BY SIMPLY HUMBLING HIMSELF?

Washington, famous head of a huge institute in abama, did just that when he was mistaken for a yard per!

ne day as he was walking past the house of a rich mily, the lady master of the house stopped him and ked him to chop some wood.

ashington gladly obliged, chopped the wood and brought to the woman's house. As he entered the house, the servant cognized him and told the woman of the house who he really was.

nbarrassed, the woman visited Washington in the institute the very next day and told him she was very s r mistaking him for someone far less than who he was.

ashington just smiled at her and said, "It's all right. I am glad to do favors for my friends."

ith that single act of humility, Washington did for his institute more than what he could have done thru his fu ising events.

at woman and her wealthy friends threw their all-out support to the institute and gave generous gifts to f projects.

UMILITY MAKES A TRUE GREAT LEADER.

A great man is always willin to be little.

MORE THAN WORDS

Good breeding consists in concealing how much we think of ourselves and how little we think of the other person.

- Mark Twain

"I can accept failure. Everyone fa at something. But I can't acce not trying."

Behind the gravity-defying moves that catapul him to greatness is a fiery passion for excellen

The lessons that he learned on the way to top: The importance of teamwork, the merit focus and discipline.

His visions, thoughts, examples. In his own words.

EXPRESSO's Special Series on MICHAEL JORDAN From his book "I Can't Accept Not Trying"

VERY SOON on EXPRESSO

eXpresso is part of PLDT's Leadership Circle campaign which envisions to help promote strong leadership principles in everyone's life

For your feedback and comm email us at expresso@pldt.co

THE eXpresso newsletter

Your child's first and last impression of a working mom

WORKING MOM

An Mercado Alcantara

AT work, we know how first and last impressions count. You try to create an impact within the first meeting—impress them with your confident air, your looks, your obvious efficiency, or your wit. It's easy to see why a brief encounter with a client or a superior could spell the difference between that promotion you've been eyeing or the exit plan you've made sure you would always have. But what about the first and last impression we create on our kids? How much thought have we really given it?

Because my son is being raised by a working mom, one of the first words he learned, after "mama" and "papa", is "bye-bye." He is used to seeing me rush out the door in the morning. If I don't catch myself, the last impression he sees of me is that of a mad woman in a mad rush. This is the image he will carry with him for the next eight hours or so while I am at work. The frenzy could be enough to erase any sense of stability, comfort, and security he may once have thought came only from me. When he sees me in my office clothes, he knows his mother is not quite herself anymore—another being has taken over her sanity and is taking her away from him.

Just as crucial as this last impression in the morning is the first impression we make on him when we walk through the door at the end of a workweek. If we're dragging our bodies through the door, if we walk in with a scowl and wait too long for a smile to show, if we bazooka our way through the threshold with a temper outburst to boost, what kind of impression would we make of ourselves to our kids? What would it say about how much you had missed them? About how you only work so that you can give them a better life? About how deeply you respect and love them?

At the First National Congress of Women in Cooperatives held last week at the University of the Philippines, I had the privilege of addressing some 200 powerful working moms, all leaders of their own cooperatives and all aching to make a difference in the lives of their children and to society. We talked about the importance of making a good impression on our children when we first meet them after office hours, and when we take leave of them before going to work. Giving the congress participants a moment to think about their morning rush and their after-work witching hour, they were stunned into silence. Yes, they had overlooked this crucial moment. Much too often, they rushed full force and fury into the family hearth, not taking a breather to manage the transition between the powerful force that we need to be at work and the gentler, nurturing presence we need to be at home.

We talked about options available to us as we re-enter home atmosphere. A number suggested orbiting around a bit; in other words, not going straight from work to home but dropping by a chapel, taking a few minutes pause at the front yard, or simply sitting still in the car, before going for a smooth landing. Others, suggested giving a clear signal to our kids that when mom gets home, we still need 5 to 15 minutes to change, shower, relax before connecting with our children. Sometimes, just getting a fresh change of clothes, shedding the office wear, is enough to tell us we are home at last and ready to make the kind of first impression that matters to our kids.

How do you manage your own witching hour? Tell us about your hello and goodbye rituals. Email me at an_Alcantara@pinoycentral.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

(An Mercado-Alcantara is founding editor of Metro Working Mom and deputy editorial director at ABS-CBN Publishing, Inc.)

PLDT whips up a different kind of brew...

From page B4

eXpresso Live! seminar speaker and PLDT president Manuel V. Pangilinan receives a plaque of appreciation from Butch Jimenez.

VISUALLY-IMPAIRED summa cum laude graduate Roselle Ambubuyog

place for as piring writers in eXpresso. Jimenez encourages writers to submit original materials.

Potent Effect

eXpresso was originally intended for the PLDT community. But since employees are free to forward the newsletter to their friends outside the company, eXpresso's fragrant brew has traveled as far as Singapore, Texas and Kazakhstan. Several local companies outside PLDT have also adopted this strong cup of inspiration.

Daily, Jimenez receives an overwhelming amount of encouraging feedback. "I have no idea how far this publication has gone, but all I know is that it does get forwarded from PLDT employees to different parts of the world." An eXpresso consumer from the US affirms, "They're great reminders and pick-me-ups and bring out (hence, 'brew') our innermost desires, which is to be the best of what we can be. How insightful that they are called 'eXpressos'! The design is so appealing as well."

Jimenez admits that eX presso has exceeded his expectations in terms of reach and medium but the real measure of success is how it has affected people's lives. "We do not have a formal mechanism to gauge how it has affected its readers but we do have hundreds of email sent to us sharing how they were uplifted. I think that someway, somehow, because of the way eXpresso is written, because of the lessons that are shared and because of this far reaching medium that the email provides us today, I'm very confident that eXpresso hits home in the hearts of its readers."

Jimenez adds, "I wouldn't be surprised if there is somebody out there I will meet someday who will attest to how eXpresso has changed his life."

Products for the soul

Jimenez's eXpresso machine is constantly churning and blending chunks of wisdom and inspiration for its avid consumers but the brewing does not stop there. The eXpresso Live! Seminar series was recently launched with PLDT's President, Manuel V. Pangilinan, and visually-impaired summa cum laude graduate Roselle Ambubuyog, sharing thoughts on leadership and success.

The response of the seminar was so overwhelming in terms of attendance and feedback that the team was encouraged to surge further with a radio campaign. Listeners could get a taste of eXpresso as a one-minute radio program over dzFE and Radio Veritas.

PLDT will soon produce a book compilation of all the eXpresso materials. "Primarily, and because of the huge amount of requests because some have missed a whole lot of issues," Jimenez claims.

An audio CD compilation of eXpresso materials interspersed with relaxing and uplifting music is also being planned. Jimenez is intent on using all sorts of medium. An eXpresso video may soon be in the works too. For now, those interested in a regular dose of eXpresso for free can email expresso@pldt.com.ph.

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1223 Ayala Center, Makati City

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- .NET / ASP Web Applications Developers
- Java Architects & Developers
- Communications Application Developers
- Web or Advertising Designers
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- Online Education Content Developers
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We thought we'd start out by revealing the terrifying truth about most award-winning creative work. And that is that it works.

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They noted that the question is no longer whether an award-winning ad can also be effective, or vice versa. The two qualities are in fact closely related.

Recently a senior marketing executive at P&G went as far as to say that the international ad festival at Cannes is a better predictor of market success than research.

Of course that doesn't mean that every attempt to be 'creative' will work.

Countless turkeys have been foisted on clients and the public in the name of 'creativity'.

And, paradoxically, great award-winning work will rarely prosper when its sole intent is the winning of said award.

Great award-winning work comes from the honest attempt to engage and enthrall the target consumer. (When was the last time you saw 'enthrall' as a goal in your advertising?) To tailor creativity to the task at hand, and do everything within your power to bring it to life.

We're not saying we have a monopoly on this kind of creativity.

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2 INNER SENSES
3 KISKISAN
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
5 HOW TO DEAL
6 FREDDY VS. JASON
7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
8 UNDERWORLD

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 S.W.A.T.
2 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
3 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
4 NAKED WEAPON
5 FIRST TIME
6 NEW BLOOD
7 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
8 THE MEDALLION

SM CITY BACOOR
4173858

1 KISKISAN
2 FREDDY VS. JASON
3 UNDERWORLD
4 HOW TO DEAL
5 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
7 TAKE MY BODY
8 KATAS

SM CITY PAMPANGA
[illegible]

1 THE MEDALLION
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 HOW TO DEAL
4 KISKISAN
5 NEW BLOOD
6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
[illegible]

1 KISKISAN
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 UNDERWORLD
4 HOW TO DEAL

SM BICUTAN
[illegible]

1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 HOW TO DEAL
4 UNDERWORLD

SM CITY MARILAO

OPENS Nov. 28

SM STA. MESA
7149522 • 7161416

1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 DEADLINE BEIRUT
3 HOW TO DEAL
4 KISKISAN
5 UNDERWORLD
6 KATAS
7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
8 SUCKERS
9 FREDDY VS. JASON
10 TAKE MY BODY

SM SOUTHMALL
[illegible]

1 KATAS
2 INNER SENSES
3 UNDERWORLD
4 HOW TO DEAL
5 FIRST TIME
6 THE MEDALLION
7 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
8 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
9 FREDDY VS. JASON
10 KISKISAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9358749

1 FIRST TIME
2 SUCKERS
3 TAKE MY BODY
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 THE MEDALLION
6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
7 UNDERWORLD
8 FREDDY VS. JASON
9 HOW TO DEAL
10 KISKISAN
11 DEADLINE BEIRUT
12 KATAS

SM CITY DAVAO
[illegible]

1 SPY KIDS 3-D
2 FIRST TIME
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
5 HOW TO DEAL
6 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE

SM CITY LUCENA
(042) 7103997-99

OPENS Oct. 3

SM MEGAMALL
6331801 • 6339401

1 BASIC
RESERVE-A-SEAT dial 6366900
2 FREDDY VS. JASON
3 UNDERWORLD
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 HOW TO DEAL
6 DEADLINE BEIRUT
7 KATAS
8 INNER SENSES
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 THE MEDALLION
11 TAKE MY BODY
12 KISKISAN

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 UNDERWORLD
2 HOW TO DEAL
3 KISKISAN
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM CITY ILOILO
3206432

1 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
2 RESERVED
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 BASIC
5 THE MEDALLION
6 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
7 RESERVED
8 FIRST TIME

SM CITY MANILA
5235049

1 HOW TO DEAL
2 FREDDY VS. JASON
3 THE MEDALLION
4 UNDERWORLD
5 DEADLINE BEIRUT
6 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
7 KISKISAN
8 KATAS
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 TAKE MY BODY
11 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
12 INNER SENSES

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
(088) 8592884

1 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
2 SPY KIDS 3-D
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE

SM CITY BAGUIO
(074) 4464585

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1 HOW TO DEAL
11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:40 END

2 UNDERWORLD
11:00 MF/11:20/1:40/4:00/6:20/8:40/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:50 END

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4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
5 HOW TO DEAL
6 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
7 SUCKERS
8 TAKE MY BODY
9 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
10 INNER SENSES

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1 UNDERWORLD
2 INNER SENSES
3 FREDDY VS. JASON
4 SUCKERS
5 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
6 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
7 HOW TO DEAL

Metro East
Marcos hway
682-8193/00
682-8280

1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 UNDERWORLD
5 HOW TO DEAL
6 TAKE MY BODY
7 KATAS
8 THE MEDALLION

Novaliches
935-3229 / 31

1 UNDERWORLD
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 FREDDY VS. JASON
4 TAKE MY BODY
5 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
6 HOW TO DEAL
7 THE MEDALLION
8 KATAS

Star Mills (045)875-1937 (045)961-5270		Imus (046)471-8188 / 875-5858
KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA	1	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
NEW BLOOD	2	SUCKERS
KISKISAN	3	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
THE MEDALLION	4	UNDERWORLD
HOW TO DEAL	5	KATAS
ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO	6	KISKISAN

Bacolod (034)441-0456-50		Iloilo (033)336-0070 to 78
HOLLY WOOD HOMICIDE	1	HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA	2	BASIC
2 FAST 2 FURIOUS	3	THE MEDALLION
BASIC	4	1ST TIME
LEGALLY BLONDE 2	5	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
KALABIT	6	2 FAST 2 FURIOUS

Sta. Rosa (049)837-0007		Malabon 288-0685-2575
ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO	1	UNDERWORLD
FREDDY VS. JASON	2	KATAS
KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA	3	KISKISAN
LIGAYA...KATUMBAS NG BUHAY	4	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
HOW TO DEAL	5	

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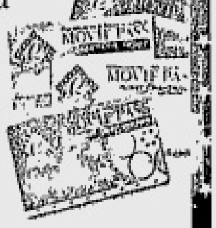

Absolutely fascinating!

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Araneta Center

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
Ali 2	KISKISAN
Ali 3	UNDERWORLD
Ali 4	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
Ali 5	HOW TO DEAL
Ali 6	FREDDY VS. JASON
Ali 7	THE MEDALLION

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OCT 1	NCA 7-STAG DERBY
OCT 2	UAAP FINALS GAME 1
OCT 5	UAAP FINALS GAME 2
OCT 6	NCA 7-STAG DERBY
OCT 8	NCA 7-STAG DERBY

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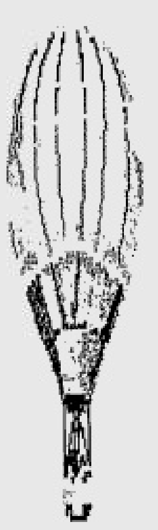
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	KATAS
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTA
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	KISKISAN
B	KATAS
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KISKISAN
CINEMA-2	KATAS
CINEMA-3	TAKE MY BODY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MEDALLION
CINEMA-6	SUCKERS
CINEMA-7	FIRST TIME
CINEMA-8	DEADLINE BEIRUT
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	UNDERWORLD
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	HOW TO DEAL
CINEMA-12	FREDDY VS JASON
CINEMA-14	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
CINEMA-15	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
LORES	
CINEMA-2	[illegible]
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PINAS)	S.W.A.T.
CINEMA-1	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
CINEMA-2	DADDY DAY CARE
CINEMA-4	BASIC
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA



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CINEMA 1
HOW TO DEAL
11:30, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:50
P13

CINEMA 2
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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

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Republic of the Philippines - Department of Labor
Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
Technical Education and Skills Development Project
TESDA Complex, Fort Bonifacio, East Service Road
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INVITATION FOR BIDS

September 28, 2003
ADB Loan No. 1750-PHI
OPEC Loan No. 841 P

1. The Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) co-financed with the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Fund for International Development towards the cost of the Technical Education and Skills Development Project (TESDP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contracts for New Construction/Refurbishment/Completion/Extension of the following 3 Centers of Technical Excellence (CenTexes):

Institution Per Region	Location
Region X	
1. Regional Training Center - Iligan City	Maria Cristina, Iligan City, Lanao del Norte
CARAGA Region	
1. Agusan del Sur School of Arts and Trades (ASSAT)	Government Center, Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur
2. Northern Mindanao School of Fisheries (NMSF)	Buenavista, Agusan del Norte

2. Bidding is open to all bidders from source countries of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
3. The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority ("the Employer") invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the New Construction/Refurbishment/Completion/Extension of the CENTEXes ("the Works") in the aforesaid institutions.
4. Bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect and acquire the bidding documents, beginning **September 29, 2003** at the Office of the Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC), between 8:00 am to 5:00 pm from Monday to Friday, at the following TESDA Regional Offices:

Region	Location/ Mailing Address	Facsimile No.	Telephone No.
X	Jupiter St., Macasandig, Cagayan de Oro City	(8822) 721-943	(88) 857-1665
CARAGA	Lildo Bldg., R. Ochoa Ave., Butuan City	(085) 815-7324	(085) 341-5220/ 225-5541

5. A complete set of bidding documents per CENTEX may be purchased by interested eligible bidders on submission of a written application to the concerned office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P 2,000.00) per bid documents at the Regional Cashier's Office.
6. The RBACs shall conduct their respective Pre-Bid Conference at 10:00 am of **October 13, 2003**, during which all clarifications related to the bidding shall be discussed. Bidders' representatives are invited to participate in the said conference.
7. All bids must be accompanied by a security of 1.00% of the total bid price, and must be delivered at the concerned Office of the RBAC at or before 10:00 am on **October 29, 2003.** Bids will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

(Sgd.) **DR. SANTIAGO A. YABUT**
Deputy Director General for
TVET Cluster
Officer-in-Charge, TESDA

(PDI--Oct. 1 & 7, 2003)

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Province of Romblon
Municipality of Looc

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section 5 of R.A. Act No. 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that Rosa Faigao Pastor has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from "Rolando" to "Roger" in the birth certificate of Rolando Estodillo Faigao who was born July 17 1958 at Looc, Romblon and whose parents are Marciano Faigao and Remedios Estodillo.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his written opposition with this Office not later than September 14, 2003.

(Sgd.) MA. WILMA F. PASTOR
Municipal Civil Registrar

PERSONAL

NOVENA PRAYER TO ST. JUDE
O, Holy St. Jude apostle and martyr, great in virtue, rich in miracles, near in kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke your special patronage in time of need, to you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg to whom God has given such great power to come to my assitance. Help me in my present, urgent petition (make your request). In return, I promise to make your name known and cause you to be invoked. Saint Jude, pray for us and all who invoke your aid. Pray this nine times a day for nine consecutive days. On the eight day your prayer will be answered, for this prayer has never known to fail. Please don't forget to publish this once your wish is granted. ASC

PUBLIC NOTICES

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO BLESSED MOTHER
(NEVER KNOWN TO FAIL)

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity. Oh star of the sea help me and show me, herein you are my Mother Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech You from bottom of My Heart to succor me in this necessity there are none that can withstand Your power Oh show me herein You are Mother.

Oh Mary, conceived without sin. Pray for us who have recoursed to thee (3x).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in Your hands (3x).

Thank you for Your Mercy toward me and being mine.

Thank You Mama Mary for answering my prayers. Amen

(This prayer must be said for three days and after three days, your request will be granted and the prayer must be published.) ASC

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit, Thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your perpetual glory. Amen. ASC

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF MANILA
BRANCH 37

IN RE PETITION FOR CORRECTION OF ENTRY
IN CIVIL REGISTRY

BLANDA L. DE LA CRUZ-DUMLAO,
Petitioner

- versus - SP. PROC. NO. 03-107256

THE CIVIL REGISTRAR OF THE CITY OF MANILA,
Respondent,
x-----------------------------------x

AMENDED ORDER

In a verified Petition for Correction of Entry the Petitioner prays, *inter alia*, that after due notice, publication and hearing, an Order be rendered directing the Civil Registry of Manila to cause the correction of entries in the Certificate of Live Birth of the Petitioner, as to date of birth, from MAY 10, 1950 to MAY 9, 1950, her name from BLANDA MONTALBO to BLANDA LIWANAG DE LA CRUZ, and her father's name from JUAN MONTALBO to JUAN DE LA CRUZ.

Finding the Petition to be sufficient in form and substance, let the Petition be set for hearing on October 17, 2003 at nine o' clock in the morning before this Branch sitting at Rooms 426-427, Fourth Floor, Manila City Hall. All interested parties are hereby notified of the said hearing and are ordered to show cause why the Petition should not be granted.

Let a copy of this Order be published, at the expense of the Petitioner, once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks, in a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Manila, to be selected by raffle pursuant to P.D. No 1079.

Furnish the Office of the Solicitor General and the Civil Register of the City of Manila with copies of the Petition and of this Order.

SO ORDERED.

Manila, September 26, 2003.

(Sgd.) VICENTE A. HIDALGO
Judge

(PDI--Oct. 1, 8 & 15, 2003)

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MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- Strong presentation skills.
- Successful sales track record with verifiable earnings.
- Familiarity with agricultural industry and/or work experience with Banana and other types of agricultural plantations is a plus.
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- Entrepreneurial spirit is highly appreciated.
- References required.

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- Part of the strategic planning team and implementor of plans to generate revenue and revenue growth.
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UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE VISAYAS
Miagao, Iloilo
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR REGISTRATION, ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The University of the Philippines in the Visayas hereby invites all interested bidders to participate in the bidding of the following Laboratory Equipment with a total approved budget of P5.8M

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1	unit	UV-Vis Spectrophotometer
1	unit	Atomic Absorption Spectrometer
1	unit	Distillation Unit for Protein Content Determination

The appropriate registration requirements and Letter of Intent (LOI) should be submitted to UPV-Bids and Awards Secretariat, UPV, Miagao, Iloilo on or before 4:00 p.m. of October 8, 2003. Registered bidders may obtain the pertinent bidding documents from the UPV-BAC Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable amount of 2,000 to the University Cashier.

Schedule of Bidding Activities:

ACTIVITY	DATE/TIME	VENUE
Issuance of Bid Documents	October 6-10, 2003	UPV, Miagao campus
Pre-Bid Conference	October 16, 2003, 1:30 p.m.	Conference Room, New Admin Bldg., UPV, Miagao campus
Opening of Eligibility Requirements and Bids	October 27, 2003, 2:00 p.m.	Conference Room, New Admin Bldg., UPV, Miagao campus

Any changes in the above stated schedule will be duly announced in a Bid Bulletin. The University reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any formality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to the University and/or nullify the bidding without giving any reason. The University further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses or losses that may be incurred in connection with the said bidding.

For further information, please contact the UPV-BAC Secretariat at Telephone Nos. (033) 338-1535; (033) 315-8137 and (033) 315-8141 during office hours or email us at this address: upv_bacsec@yahoo.com.

DR. GLENN D. AGUILAR
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Sept. 24 & Oct. 1, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
CITY COUNCIL
Manila

ORDINANCE NO. 8059

AN ORDINANCE EXPROPRIATING THAT PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED AS LOT NO. 2-A, BLOCK NO. 3012 MEASURING EIGHT HUNDRED TWO SQUARE METERS AND SEVENTY DECIMETERS (802.70 SQ.M.) SITUATED IN THE FIRST DISTRICT OF MANILA, COVERED BY TCT NO. 54660 AND BOUNDED BY FRANCO, ESGUERRA AND DANDAN STREETS, OWNED BY TZARITA DE GUIA FOR RESALE AT COST AND ON INSTALLMENT BASIS NOT EXCEEDING TWENTY (20) YEARS TO QUALIFIED AND BONA FIDE TENANTS/OCCUPANTS THEREAT, APPROPRIATING FOUR MILLION THIRTEEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (PHP4,013,500.00) THEREOF.

Be it ordained by the City Council of Manila, THAT:

SECTION 1. That parcel of land described as Lot No. 2-A, Block No. 3012 measuring Eight Hundred Two Square Meters and Seventy Decimeters (802.70 sq.m.) situated in the First District of Manila, covered by TCT No. 54660 and bounded by Franco, Esguerra and Dandan Streets owned by Tzarita de Guia is hereby expropriated.

SEC. 2. The aforementioned parcel of land, when acquired shall be subdivided and resold to the qualified and bona fide tenants/occupants thereat at cost and on installment basis not exceeding twenty (20) years, under the Land-for-the-Landless Program of the City Government. *PROVIDED, That* the members of the FRAMACEDA Tenants Association be given priority thereto.

SEC. 3. The amount of FOUR MILLION THIRTEEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (Php4,013,500.00) representing the *market* value of the property, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated, subject to the availability of funds, as certified to by the City Treasurer: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That the amount equivalent to Fifteen Percent (15%) of the zonal valuation of the property is hereby set aside from the lump sum appropriation of the FIFTY MILLION PESOS (PHP50,000,000.00) for the acquisition of landed estates under the Land-for-the-Landless Program of the City of Manila as provided for in the Executive Budget.

SEC. 4. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Ordinance shall take effect upon its approval.

Enacted by the City Council of Manila at its regular session today, August 26, 2003.

Approved by His Honor, the Mayor, on 19th September, 2003.

APPROVED:

JOSE L. ATIENZA, JR.
Mayor
City of Manila

DANILO B. LACUNA
Vice-Mayor and Presiding Officer
City Council, Manila

ATTESTED:

EMMANUEL R. SISON
Secretary to the Mayor

RODOLFO F. LAPID
Secretary to the City Council

PRINCIPAL AUTHORS: HON. MARLON M. LACSON, Majority Floor Leader and HON. MARTIN V. ISIDRO, JR.
CO-AUTHORS: Hon. Benjamin D. Asilo, Hon. Abraham C. Cabochan, Hon. Irma C. Alfonso-Juson, Hon. Arlene W. Koa and Hon. Isko Moreno.

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City
Healthline 637-9999 www.philhealth.gov.ph

11 July 2003

PhilHealth Circular
No.24, s-2003

TO : ALL NHIP MEMBERS, ACCREDITED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS, PHILHEALTH REGIONAL OFFICES, OFFICERS AND STAFF OF PHILHEALTH CENTRAL OFFICE AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT: Omnibus Guidelines on Entitlement to NHIP Benefits

Section 1. Rationale

To ensure the continuous or uninterrupted provision of responsive benefits to all NHIP members without compromising the financial viability of the NHIP fund, the current guidelines on entitlement to benefits are hereby revised in accordance with the pertinent provisions of R.A.7875 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Section 2. Legal Basis

2.1 Section 12 of Republic Act No. 7875 on Entitlement to Benefits provides.

"A member whose premium contributions for at least three (3) months have been paid within the six (6) months prior to the first day of his or his dependents' availment shall be entitled to the benefits of the Program: *Provided, that such member can show that he contributes thereto with sufficient regularity, as evidenced in their health insurance ID card; and Provided further, that he is not currently subject to legal penalties as provided for in Section 44 of this Act.*"

The following need not pay the monthly contributions to be entitled to the Program's benefits:

a) Retirees and pensioners of the SSS and GSIS prior to the effectivity of this Act;
b) Members who reach the age of retirement as provided for by law and have paid at least one hundred twenty monthly contributions; and
c) Enrolled indigents

2.2 Sufficient Regularity of Premium Contribution is defined under Section 3-lll of the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations as "payment of premium contribution of at least nine (9) months within the twelve month period immediately prior to the month of availment" while Offenses and Penalties under Section 44 of RA 7875 are governed by Title VII of its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

The sufficient regularity rule shall be enforced either as a requirement for entitlement to pregnancy-related benefits and other disease-specific benefit packages to be declared as such by the PhilHealth Board or as a requirement in allowing retroactive payment of premium contributions as prescribed in Sections 5, 7 and 8 hereof.

Section 3. Pregnancy-related Benefits

This refers to benefits that may be availed during the course of pregnancy, including Normal Spontaneous Delivery (NSD) Package, Breech Delivery and Caesarian Section.

Section 4. Types of NHIP Members

Based on Section 12 of RA 7875, NHIP members are classified as follows:

4.1 Paying member

4.1.1 Employed member- refers to all government and private sector employees including household helpers and sea-based OFWs who are compulsory members of the NHIP. This also includes all the personnel of Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) who entered the service after the effectivity of RA 8291 (GSIS Act)

4.1.2 Individually-Paying member- refers to a member who is other than an employed, indigent, or a retiree member, who pays the required contribution or whose contribution is being paid by another individual or private entity according to the rules as maybe prescribed by the Corporation. This includes all self-employed, personnel of international organizations based in the Philippines, individuals separated from employment, unemployed persons who are not qualified as indigents, parents who are not qualified as legal dependents, Filipinos who are residing in other countries and citizens of other countries residing and/or working in the Philippines; and

4.1.3 Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW)- refers to a person who is to be engaged, or is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which the worker is not a legal resident. The term is to be used interchangeably with Migrant Worker.

4.2 Non-Paying member

4.2.1 Indigent/Sponsored member- refers to a member with no visible means of income or whose income is insufficient for the subsistence of the family, as identified based on specific criteria set by the Corporation; and whose premium contribution is shouldered by the LGU and/or donor and the National Government through PhilHealth

4.2.2 Retiree/Pensioner- refers to a member who has reached the age of retirement as provided for by law and has paid at least 120 monthly premium contributions. Retirees and Pensioners of the SSS and GSIS prior to the effectivity of this Act, retired underground mine workers and all other NHIP members who are qualified to enroll as retirees/pensioners pursuant to the provisions of PhilHealth Circular No. 33 Series 2001 fall under this category

Section 5. Rules on the Grant of Entitlement to NHIP Benefits

5.1 General Entitlement to NHIP Benefit Package

Members and/or their dependents shall be entitled to avail of the NHIPBenefit Package if the following eligibility requirements are met:

5.1.1 Paying members

- Employed Sector members - shall be entitled to avail of NHIP benefits subject to the payment of at least three (3) monthly premium contributions within the immediate six (6) months prior to the month of confinement;
- Individually-Paying members - shall be entitled to avail of NHIP benefits subject to the payment of at least three (3) monthly premium contributions within the immediate six (6) months prior to the month of confinement, and
- Overseas Filipino Workers - shall be entitled to avail of NHIP benefits on the date of effectivity stated in the Medicare Eligibility Certificate (MEC) or payment of at least three (3) monthly premium contributions within the immediate six (6) months prior to the month of confinement for those enrolled under the Individually Paying Program, subject to subsequent rules which may be promulgated by the Corporation.

5.1.2 Non-Paying Members

- Indigent/Sponsored members - shall be entitled to avail of NHIP benefits on the date of effectivity stated in the PhilHealth card.
- Retirees/Pensioners- shall be entitled to avail of NHIP benefits upon reaching the age of retirement as provided for by law and payment of at least one hundred twenty (120) monthly premium contributions.

5.2 Entitlement to Pregnancy-Related Benefits

For pregnancy-related benefits, the following rules shall apply:

5.2.1 Paying Members

- Employed Sector members- shall be entitled to avail of pregnancy-related benefits subject to the payment of at least three (3) monthly premium contributions within the immediate six (6) months prior to the month of confinement;
- Individually-Paying members- shall be entitled to avail of pregnancy-related benefits subject to the payment of at least three (3) monthly premium contributions within the immediate six (6) months prior to the month of confinement *and* establishment of sufficient regularity.
- Overseas Filipino Workers - shall be entitled to avail of pregnancy-related benefits on the date of effectivity stated in the Medicare Eligibility Certificate (MEC).

For OFWs who are enrolled under the IPP, payment of at least three (3) monthly premium contributions within the immediate six (6) months prior to the month of confinement *and* establishment of sufficient regularity shall be required.

5.2.2 Non-Paying Members

- Indigent/Sponsored members - shall be entitled to avail of pregnancy-related benefits on the date of effectivity stated in the PhilHealth card.
- Retirees/Pensioners- shall be entitled to avail of pregnancy-related benefits upon reaching the age of retirement as provided for by law and payment of at least one hundred twenty (120) monthly premium contributions

Section 6. Change in Membership Category

6.1 For the purpose of computing the total number of monthly premium contribution for those applying as retiree members, premium payments shall be counted regardless of membership category.

6.2 For the purpose of computing the number of qualifying contributions in relation to eligibility rules, the premium payments made by any type of NHIP member extends to his/her dependents. Hence, a dependent of any NHIP member who has reached the age of majority and immediately enrolls as an IPP member may be conferred with eligibility and/or sufficient regularity of premium contribution ascertained from his/her previous coverage as a dependent.

6.3 Any employed member who is terminated from employment or any indigent or OFW member whose membership coverage expires must pay his premium contribution as an IPP member immediately within the calendar quarter of separation/date of card expiry, if such calendar quarter is not fully covered by premium payments, in order to continuously avail of benefits. Otherwise, entitlement to benefits shall be suspended accordingly, subject to the rules on retroactive payment of premium contributions

Section 7. Rules on Retroactive Payment of Premium Contribution

The Corporation may allow retroactive payment of premium contribution, subject to the following rules:

7.1 Any employed member who is terminated from employment or indigent or OFW member whose membership coverage expired and who failed to immediately pay his/her premium as an IPP member shall be allowed to retroactively settle his/her premium contribution. The member shall be given a grace period of one(1) calendar quarter immediately after the unpaid quarterly period to retroactively settle his obligation, without necessarily complying with the sufficient regularity rule

7.2 Pursuant to PhilHealth Circular No. 08 series 2001, an IPP member who has missed/unpaid premium contribution and has established sufficient regularity of premium payment shall be allowed to retroactively pay within one (1) month immediately following the missed period.

7.3 Newly-enrolled IPP members whose membership to NHIP cover less than nine (9) months reckoned from the initial date of enrolment may be allowed to pay retroactive premium payments within one (1) month immediately following the missed period, even without fulfilling the requirement of sufficient regularity to be able to avail of NHIP benefits. Their entitlement to pregnancy-related benefits shall, however, be subject to the sufficient regularity rule.

Section 8. Application of Sufficient Regularity to Newly-Enrolled IPP Members

Pursuant to Section 6.2 hereof, a newly-enrolled IPP member previously covered as a dependent for six months or more and who immediately enrolls after reaching the age of majority may qualify for availment of pregnancy-related benefits requiring sufficient regularity of premium contribution on the calendar quarter following his/her enrolment.

Conversely, a newly enrolled IPP member who was not previously covered as a dependent for six months or more shall be subject to the provision of Section 5.2.1 on entitlement to pregnancy-related benefits.

Section 9. Separability Clause

The Corporation may require other rules of entitlement to disease-specific packages/benefits that may henceforth be implemented, subject to prior approval by the PhilHealth Board.

Section 10. Effectivity, Prospective Application of Rules on Entitlement to Pregnancy-Related Benefits and Repealing Clause

This Circular shall take effect immediately.

In view of the quarterly contribution scheme under the Individually Paying Program, however, Section 5.2.1 of these Rules shall be applied prospectively. Hence, an Individually Paying member who enrolls on or after October 1, 2003 should comply with the rule on sufficient regularity to avail of pregnancy-related benefits, as evidenced by proof of payment of pertinent calendar quarters.

For those enrolled prior to October 1, 2003, they shall be entitled to pregnancy-related benefits upon payment of the three months within six months premium contribution prior to the date of confinement until the end of the 2nd calendar quarter of 2004.

By July 2004, all IPP members shall be required to comply with the rule on sufficient regularity to avail of pregnancy-related benefits.

All other Orders which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Circular are hereby repealed.

(Sgd) FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, M.D., M.Sc.
President and Chief Executive Officer

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JUANA BERNARDO CRUZ

Peacefully joined her Savior on Monday, September 24, 2003 at the age of 92.

Her bereaved children **Raul & Lennie Mirasol, Alfonso "Boy" Jr., Jacinta, Nestor & Millet Esguerra, Ma. Socorro Aquino**, and **Steve** (†) & **Marilou**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives & friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Saint John Bosco Chapel, Don Bosco Parish.

Interment will be on Friday, October 3, 2003, after the 9 a.m. Mass.

Zenaida (Aida) Janeo-Virata

September 24, 1940 - September 29, 2003

God's beloved daughter, **Aida**, has peacefully
joined her Creator in Paradise

Please join her parents **Faustina** and **Rodrigo, Sr.** (†)
Brothers **Rodrigo, Jr.**, **Ernesto** (†), **Oscar** (†), **Nestor**,
Arturo (†), **Ramon** and **Danilo**,
Sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces and their families in prayer for
the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains will be at the San Martin de Porres Church, Narra St.,
United Parañaque Subdivision I, Parañaque City.

A memorial mass will be held at 9:00 a.m. on October 4, 2003 to
be followed by the interment at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat,
Parañaque City.

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Helping in the Grief of Many People

INTERMENT NOTICE

Name	Date of Interment	Time	Place of Interment	Place of Wake
ATTY. SIXTO A. MARTINEZ, JR.	Oct. 01, 2003	11:00 A.M.	Holy Gardens Memorial Park Angono, Rizal	Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Ave Quezon City
FLABIANA V. REGENCIA	Oct. 02, 2003	1:00 P.M.	Holy Gardens Memorial Park Angono, Rizal	#355 National Road Tayuman, Binangonan Rizal
ANNA ANGELA R. REYNOSO	Oct. 04, 2003	10:00 A.M.	Holy Garden Valley Memorial Park Antipolo City	#961 Boston St. Brookside Hills Subd. Cainta, Rizal
REMIA A. DIVINAGRACIA	Oct. 04, 2003	2:00 P.M.	Holy Garden Valley Memorial Park Antipolo City	B10 L11 Mabiyaya St Masagana Vill., Mahabang Parang, Angono Rizal

KAHANGAHANGANG PARANGAL PARA SA MINAMAHAL.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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"In peace I shall both lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord makes me secure..." *Psalm 4:9*

LIBERATO S. JIMENEZ, JR.

of Kawit, Cavite and Quezon City

Peacefully joined our Lord on September 28, 2003 at the age of 73 and now with our beloved father Liberato, Sr.

Survived by his mother, **Pilar S. Jimenez**, his bereaved wife **Primavera**; children and children-in-laws, **Liberato C. Jimenez III**, **Leslie** and **Eduardo Loyola**, **Lizza** and **Venerando Batas** and **Joseph Lee Jimenez**; grandchildren **Luc** and **Liselle Loyola**, **Brian**, **Brent** and **Bradley Batas**, brothers and sisters-in-law. They and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, October 4, 2003 at Loyola Memorial Park after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at Funeraria Paz.

Our Dearly Beloved

REYNALDO "Nardo" PASCUAL RAMOS

(December 1, 1925 - September 28, 2003)
of San Roque, Baliwag, Bulacan

Peacefully joined our Lord on September 28, 2003 at the age of 78.

His loving wife **CLARA SANTOS RAMOS**; children and children-in-law **TESSIE & JUN, BABY, CLARITA & RENE, MILA, DORIES & ALVIN, JOJO & JOY, WEWET & LOT**, and **AKAI**; grandchildren **RJ, JOY, BONGECK, ANDRE, KT, MATHEO, JOANNA, JANETTE, JANNO, ADRIEL**, and **LIA**; brothers & sisters **EMILIA** (†), **MARCELO, CARIDAD, AMANDA, MARCIAL, FILOMENA** and **ALFREDO**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Felicidad Chapel, Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta AVenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, October 2, 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 8:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

CLASSIFIEDS

INVITATION TO BID

The Pasig City Government through Pasig City General Hospital with principal office at F. Legaspi Ext., Maybunga, Pasig City hereby invites suppliers to a sealed bidding for various drugs & medicines, medical, laboratory, radiology, dental, waste management, maintenance, office supplies and hospital equipment for the 3rd quarter of 2003

ACTIVITY	TIME	DATE	PLACE
1. Pre-bid for various Drugs & Medicines	9 AM	10-03-03	Conference Room (PCGH)
2. Pre-bid various Medical, Laboratory, Radiology, Dental & Waste Management supplies	10 AM	10-03-03	Conference Room (PCGH)
3. Bidding various Drugs & Medicines	8 AM	10-09-03	Session Hall, Pasig City Hall
4. Bidding various Medical Laboratory, Radiology, Dental & Waste Management supplies	8 AM	10-10-03	Session Hall, Pasig City Hall
5. Re-Bid for Drugs & Medicines	9 AM	10-16-03	Conference Room (PCGH)
6. Re-Bid for Medical, Laboratory, Radiology, Dental & Waste Management Supplies	10 AM	10-17-03	Conference Room (PCGH)
7. Bidding various Office supplies		TBA (To Be Announced)	
8. Bidding various Maintenance supplies		TBA (To Be Announced)	
9. Bidding various Hospital Equipment		TBA (To Be Announced)	

The Pasig City Committee on Award shall award the contract to suppliers with the lowest qualifying bids. It also reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor deviation in the bid tender documents which does not affect the substance and validity of the bids and reserves the right to accept such bids most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) REYNALDO C. CASEÑAS
City General Services Officer

(PDI – Oct. 1, 2003)

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KAGAWARAN NG KATARUNGAN
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(LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY)
East Avenue cor. NIA Road
Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Registration Authority (LRA) invites all interested Medium "A" contractors, duly registered with the Government-Electronic Procurement System (G-EPS), to participate in the public bidding for the construction of the Proposed Registry of Deeds Building of Batangas Province. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid is PESOS THREE MILLION EIGHT HUNDRED SEVENTY FIVE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED TWENTY (P3,875,820.00) and the contract duration shall be for a period of One Hundred Eighty (180) calendar days. The source of funding is SARO No. C-02-08700 dated December 13, 2002.

Interested Contractors shall be required to submit a LETTER OF INTENT, addressed to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee for Infrastructure Projects (BAC-Infrastructure), 5th Floor, LRA Building, East Avenue corner NIA Road, Diliman, Quezon City with telephone no. 924-47-33 and shall submit for registration, a certified true copy of the following documents (originals to be presented for authentication):

a. G-EPS
b. DTI or SEC Registration Certificate
c. Mayor's Permit and Renewal of PCAB Contractor's License as of fiscal year 2003
d. Taxpayer's Identification Number
e. Sworn statement from the prospective bidder that it is not included in the "blacklist" issued by CIAP.

Eligibility Forms can be secured from the BAC-Infrastructure Secretariat, 5th Floor, LRA Building, from **October 02 to 09, 2003**, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS FIVE HUNDRED (P500.00)

Deadline for the submission of eligibility requirements is on **October 17, 2003.** Prospective bidders shall present the original documents of all eligibility requirements for authentication purposes. Eligible parties shall be issued a complete set of Bid Documents on **October 31, 2003** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS THREE THOUSAND (P3,000.00).

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at the LRA, Multi-Purpose Hall, 5th Floor, LRA Building on **November 05, 2003** at 10:00 o'clock a.m.

Sealed bids in two (2) envelopes shall be received and opened at the LRA Multi Purpose Hall on **November 17, 2003** at 10:00 o'clock a.m.

The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formality in the bids received, and accept such offer that may be considered most advantageous to LRA. The bidder shall bear all costs in the preparation of their bids and the government shall in no case be responsible or liable for their costs regardless of the outcome of the bidding process.

(Sgd.) **EDILBERTO R. FELICIANO**
Chairman, BAC-Infrastructure

(PDI-Sept 17 24 & Oct 1, 2003)

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

A. The University of the Philippines Diliman hereby invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility to bid for:

Lease of the basement area of Vinzons Hall with an approximate area of 237.5 sq.m. which is suitable for an art gallery, bookstore, business center, clothing apparel store, laundromat, fitness center, music store and a shop for antiques, curios and collectibles.

B. The following eligibility requirements in two copies, duly certified must be submitted to the Supply and Property Management Office (SPMO) Instructional Materials Corp. Building (National Book Development Board) Regidor Street fronting the PAG-ASA Astronomical Observatory, U.P. Campus, Diliman, Quezon City, to form the basis for evaluation and assessment for pre-qualification of bidders:

1. SEC/DTI/Cooperative Development Registration Papers
2. 2003 Business License/Permit
3. Income Tax Return for the last two (2) years (2001 & 2002) with accompanying Audited Financial Statements marked 'RECEIVED' by the BIR
4. Company Profile
5. List of clients (past and present) with corresponding contract costs references and supporting documents
6. List of company equipment and other assets
7. Statement of the company that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, offices or corporations

DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS WILL BE LISTED IN THE [illegible] [illegible]UMENTS

The above mentioned requirements must be complet[illegible] su[illegible]tted in two (2) separate folders with Table of Contents and properly la[illegible]d. [illegible]erwise, the same will not be accepted by the SPMO.

NOTE: ONLY ELIGIBLE BIDDERS WILL BE ISSUED THE BID [illegible]CUMENTS AND ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BIDDING.

C. Deadline for submission: October 10, 2003
D. Pre-bidding and bidding schedules shall be announced to all eligible bidders.
E. The University of the Philippines reserves the right to review the qualifications of all selected bidders subject to technical, financial and production criteria reject any or all bids, waive any formality or defect therein and accept the offer considered to be most advantageous to the University.
F. For further particulars, please inquire from Mr. Pedro E. Fajardo, Chief-SPMO anytime during office hours at the above mentioned address or call Tel. No. 920-5374 (direct line) and 920-5301 local 4331, 4911 and 4913, or contract the Business Concessions Office (BCO) at Tel. No. 925-6996 and 920-5301 local 7926.

(Sgd.) EMERLINDA R. ROMAN
Chancellor

(PDI – Sept. 24 & Oct. 1, 2003)

Relief from new credit card rules sought

By Clarissa S. Batino

BANKS and credit card companies have asked the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for a one-year transition period before they would be required to write-off soured accounts or set aside capital for loans unpaid for 181 days or more.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said some credit card operators had sought a relief period of six months to one year before the stricter BSP policy, which was released two months ago, would be implemented.

"They want either that or a staggered build-up of the provisions that must be set for the loan losses," he said.

Under the circular released in August, banks must set aside capital or write off loans that have remained past due for at least 181 days.

"It is difficult to defer the implementation of a regulation we had already issued. Maybe we can look at the second option but it would be up to the Monetary Board," said Reyes.

The circular ordered banks engaged in the credit card business to classify past due accounts. Accounts unpaid for 91 to 120 days should be classified as substandard; those unpaid for 121 to 180 days as doubtful, and those unpaid for 181 days or more should be classified as loss.

The tighter credit card guidelines issued in August sought to provide transparency in the computation of finance and other charges, including effective interest rates and other fees, to guide the card holders and prevent abuses.

The BSP wanted credit card companies to bring down their charges on account of more prudent practices instead of penalizing even good customers for mistakes made by delinquent account holders.

The new rules also prescribed a uniform accounting treatment for credit card receivables and the basis in determining accounts considered past due to allow tighter monitoring of the industry.

"The new rules are expected not only to promote the safety and soundness of banks but are also aimed at improving consumer protection," the BSP said in a statement.

Under the circular, banks and their subsidiary credit card firms must set up a risk management system for their credit card operations. The system must be documented and must cover the organizational setup, records and reports, accounting and internal control.

Written policies must be established on application requirements, solicitation and application processing, credit limits, preapproved cards, extension cards, cash advances, and billings and payments.

Banks and credit card firms were directed to keep strictly confidential information about the cardholder. A cardholder is given at least 20 days from the statement date to examine the charges and inform the bank of any billing error.

Bangko Sentral now a member of BIS

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has invested $60 million for the country's membership in the Bank for International Settlement, a global organization of central banks that sets the international standards for financial and monetary practices and regulations.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said the country's membership in the BIS would give the BSP a voice in the international body.

The BSP was invited by the BIS to become a member in June along with Algeria, Chile, Indonesia, Israel and New Zealand. The invitation for the BSP to subscribe to 3,000 BIS shares was contained in a letter sent by BIS general manager Malcolm Knight.

"As a member, we will now be consulted in the setting of policies and programs of the BIS. We will also have access to crucial information available only to members," said Reyes.

Currently, the BIS counts 51 central banks as members, all of which are entitled to be represented in and to vote during general meetings usually held in June or July. Voting power depends on the number of shares a country had subscribed to.

As a member, the BSP would also be entitled to dividends. *Clarissa S. Batino*

Inclusion of farm goods in RP-Japan deal sought

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture said it would work on the inclusion of concessions for agricultural products in the Japan-Philippine Economic Partnership (JPEP) agreement, which is currently being crafted by the two countries.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Segfredo Serrano said the inclusion of agricultural products in the agreement would be a big boost to the farm sector.

Under the JPEP, the two governments will grant lower tariffs or duty-free access to products traded by the two countries.

However, Japanese trade officials are hesitant to open their market to farm products. Japan, for its part, aims to expand its manufactured goods exports to the Philippines.

"In our discussions last week, we emphasized to our Japanese counterparts that we see more opportunities than dangers in this bilateral agreement," Serrano said in an interview.

Philippine exports of fresh vegetables and fruits to Japan are currently slapped tariffs ranging from 15 to 20 percent.

Serrano said studies were being undertaken to assess the possible impact of the agreement on the economy. Some sectors said the biggest beneficiary could be the services sector. However, Serrano is confident the agricultural sector would also benefit from the planned JPEP deal.

The deal is expected to further open up the Japanese market for the Philippine workers, particularly nurses and caregivers.

George Manzano, a professor in the University of Asia and the Pacific, who conducted a study on the proposed RP-Japan bilateral trade pact, said that preliminary indications showed that the two countries would mutually benefit from JPEP in terms of trade volume.

Plantersbank takes over Region Bank

PLANTERS Development Bank is taking over Region Bank effective today following the deal's approval by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

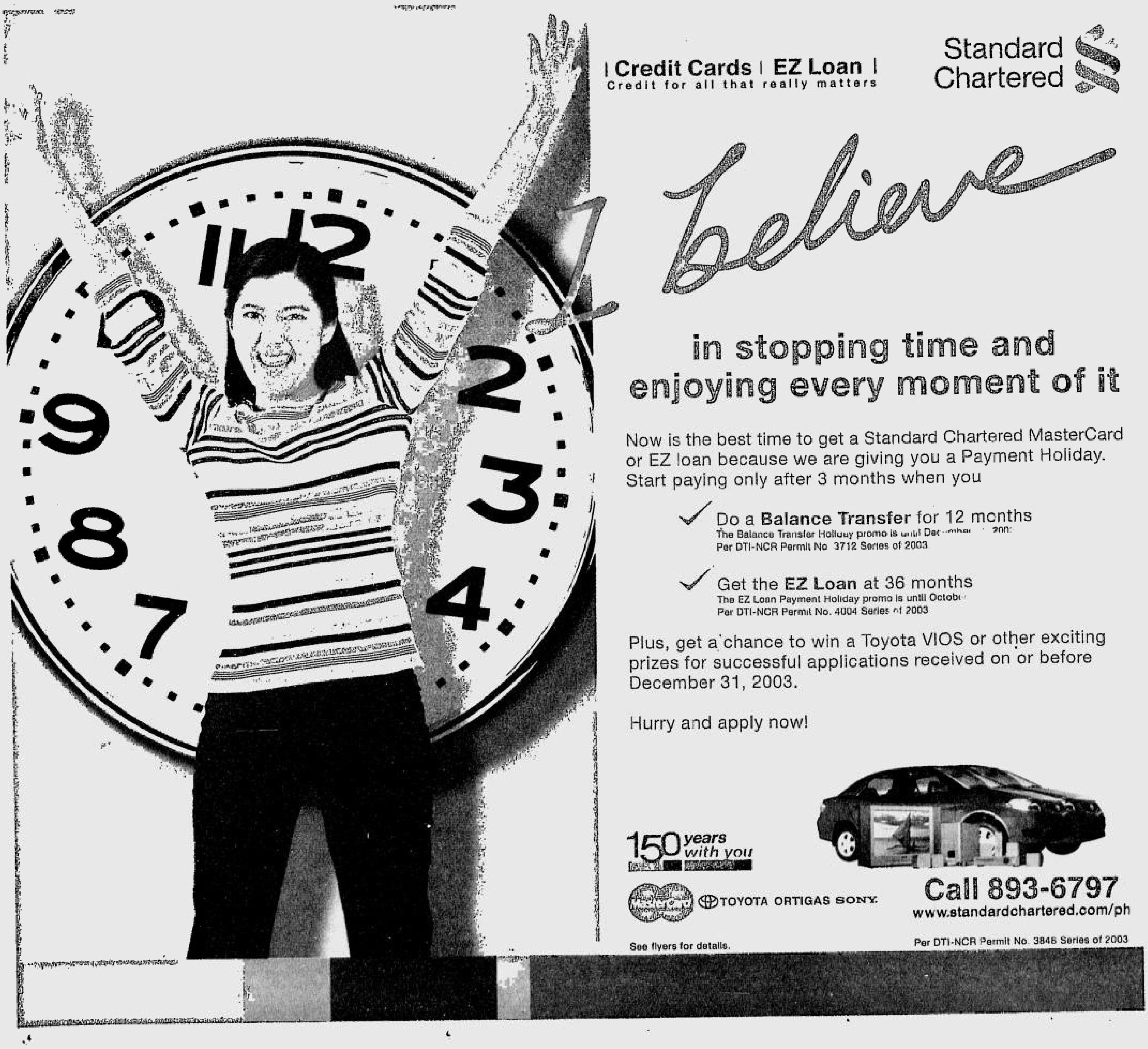
Region Bank, also known as Los Baños Rural Bank, is the largest rural bank in the country with total resources of P1.6 billion and a network of 11 branches in Laguna, Batangas and Muntinlupa. Los Baños Rural Bank started operations in February 1960.

Plantersbank chair and CEO Ambassador Jesus P. Tambunting said the acquisition would allow the bank to increase its branch network and depositor base. "We will definitely take full advantage of Region Bank's access to the entrepreneurs to expand our reach in areas where there is a strong presence of SMEs," Tambunting says.

Plantersbank will now have a nationwide network of 71 branches, consolidated assets of P27 billion and capital of P2.7 billion.

Incorporated as Bulacan Development Bank in 1961, shareholders assumed control and ownership of the bank in 1972. It merged with Bulacan Savings and Loan Association, and was renamed Planters Development Bank a year later. Plantersbank acquired Investors Saving and Loan Association based in Makati in 1977, Agro-Industrial Development Bank of Pampanga in 1984, Country Development Bank of Olongapo in 1986 and Active Bank last year.

More than 40 percent of the bank is owned by foreign institutions such as The Netherlands Development Finance Co., the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank's International Finance Corp. (IFC).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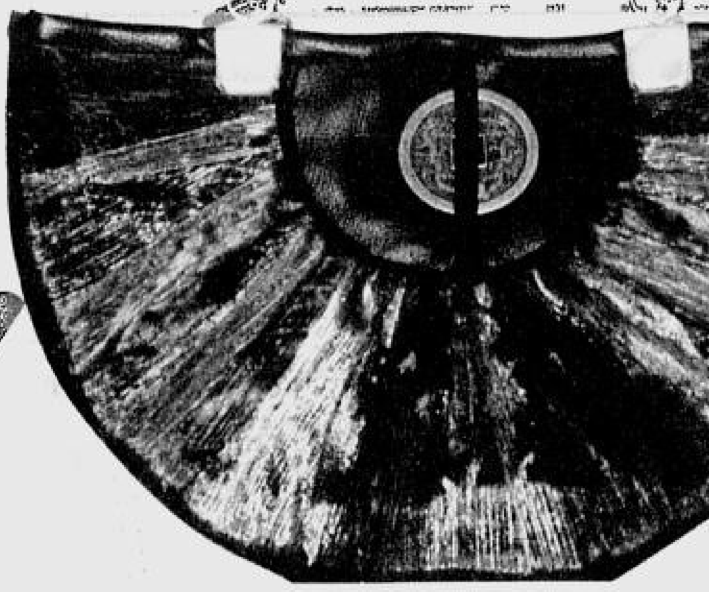
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso
hief of Correspondents Pam Pastor

Merienda muna...

Bag hags!

Two young designers have stitched together a new line of idiosyncratic couture satchels called Fab Bag



GEISHA. For young, no-nonsense corporate types who may want a little something "risky" to go with their outfit

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Chito Vecina

IF bags—fabulous bags—are the means to make this world a "beautiful" place, these two young fellows will happily whip them up.

"Let's make the world a beautiful place one grab at a time," says the gregarious John Magsaysay. The 19-year-old is the creative mind behind the new line of couture bags called, quite simply, Fab Bag. His friend, Christalyn Fame Lelis, 20, takes care of the business aspect of their venture.

Like many young people, Magsaysay and Lelis are big fashion devotees. They go out a lot and, naturally, like to look good. The two are avowed shopaholics who, ironically, are quite opposed to fashion consumerism, thus their penchant for the flea market (*ukay-ukay*).

"We like beautiful things, but we don't want to look like everyone else," explains Magsaysay, who's a fashion stylist. "We don't want to have what everyone else has." Thus their objection to mass-market finds.

Often, too, the duo couldn't find what they like in the stores, so they just decided to create their own stuff.

"At first, we were designing for our friends," recalls Magsaysay. "We got so thrilled with the idea [of making bags according to our own tastes and specifications], we thought why not make a business out of it?"

They pulled their resources together—a meager P10,000, Lelis says—and they've never looked back.

First collection

Fab Bag is introducing its first collection called Kimono. The collection is undeniably Eastern in inspiration with hints of vintage Victorian thrown in, but Magsaysay stresses it's not hardcore orientalia. The Asian influence is decidedly subtle; he chooses to use Chinese prosperity coins instead of the usual elements like bright brocade fabrics.

Magsaysay and Lelis themselves have opposing tastes, thus the former takes potential clients' varied tastes into consideration when designing.

Fab Bag has five models for each collection, and they come in very limited pieces.

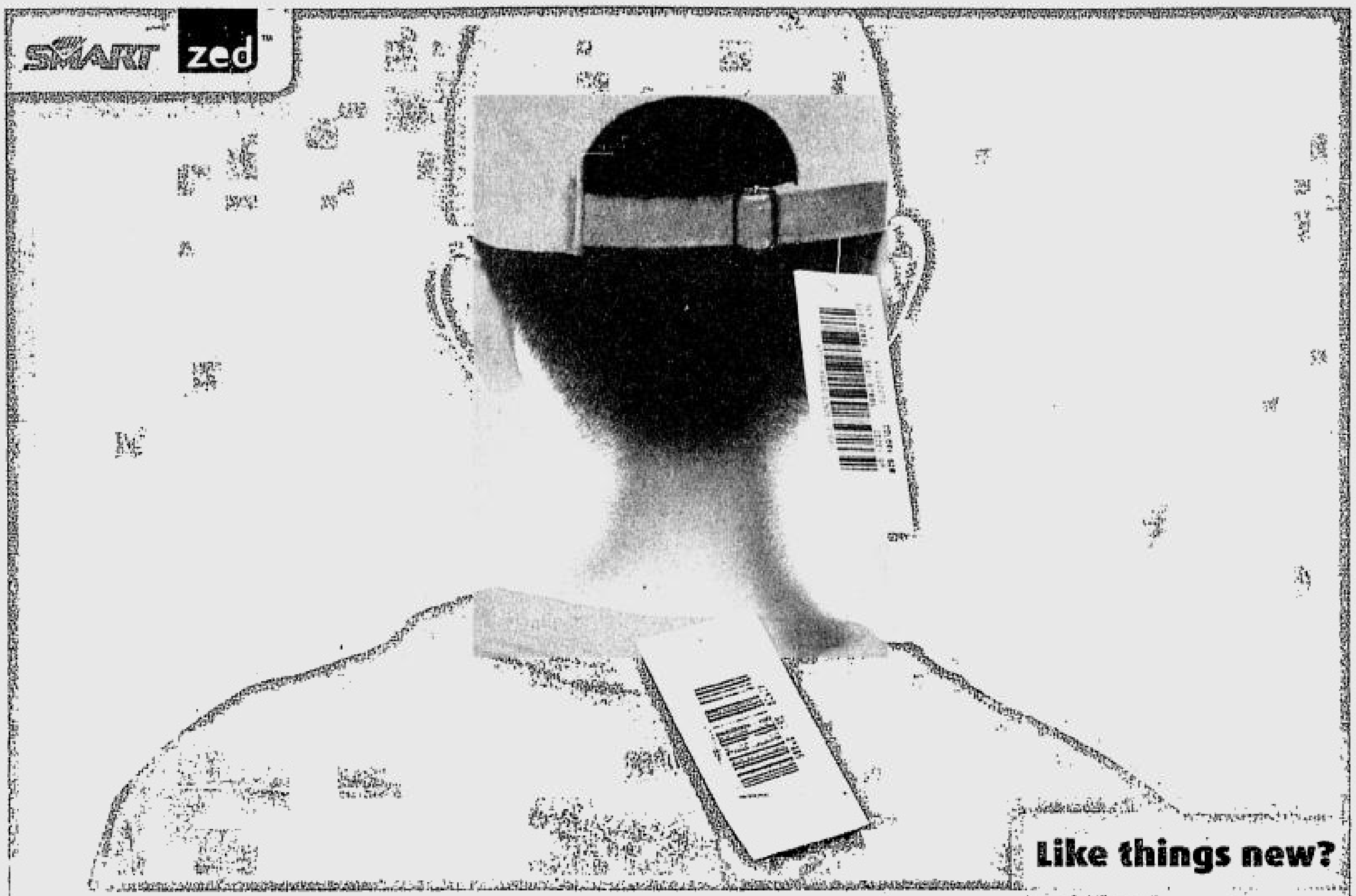
Kimono collection has Yakuza, an all-black boat-shaped clutch with satin ribbon fringes, while Koi is a blue clutch with a shape akin to Dior's famed saddlebag.

"Very Elle Woods" is how its designer describes Pagoda, the pink creation named after its shape. The chic fan-shaped handbag covered in multicolored organza ribbons, on the other hand, is aptly named Geisha, while Shaolin is an unusually shaped round clutch with multicolored satin ribbons.

"It's cheap and an often overlooked material," explains Magsaysay of his choice to use

BAG/ C2

FAB PAIR. John Magsaysay and Fame Lelis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LOGO ANGHELS 17
LOGO JESUS 18
LOGO CUTEGIRL1 19
LOGO GWAPO1 20
LOGO UDAMAN1
LOGO DOUDOG
LOGO BEEFLY
LOGO BOTTLE
LOGO FACE
LOGO FISHKIS
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Hitlist

1	Mr. Suave	*Parokya Ni Edgar*	**TONE MRSUAVE**
2	Spaghetti Song	*Sexbomb*	**TONE SPAG**
3	Unwell	*Matchbox 20*	**TONE UNWELL**
4	Broken Vow	*Lara Fabian*	**TONE BROKEN**
5	Can't Lose You	*F4*	**TONE CANTLOSE**
6	Where Is The Love	*Black-Eyed Peas*	**TONE WERISLUV**
7	Here We Are	*F4*	**TONE HEREWE**
8	Get Busy	*Sean Paul*	**TONE GETBUSY**
9	Crazy In Love	*Beyonce Knowles*	**TONE CRAZYIN**
10	Buffalo Soldier	*Bob Marley*	**TONE BUFFALO**
11	If You're Not The One	*Daniel Bedingfield*	**TONE IFYOURNOT**
12	Faint	*Linkin Park*	**TONE FAINT**
13	Panaginip	*Jolina Magdangal*	**TONE PANAGINIP**
14	Underappreciated	*Christina Aguilera*	**TONE UNDERAP**
15	Going Under	*Evanescence*	**TONE GOINGU**
16	Build Me Up, Buttercup	*Sound Alike*	**TONE BUTTERCUP**
17	I Know What You Want	*Busta Rhymes And Mariah*	**TONE IKNOWAT**
18	We Are The Champions	*Queen*	**TONE CHAMPIONS**
19	Love Me For A Reason	*Osmonds*	**TONE LOVEME**
20	Keep On Singing My Song	*Christina Aguilera*	**TONE KEEPON**
	Breathe	*Blu Cantrell & Sean Paul*	**TONE BREATHE1**
	Give Me A Chance	*Ric Segreto*	**TONE ACHANCE**
	How Can I	*Martin Nievera*	**TONE HOWCANI**
	Kung Maibabalik Ko Lang	*Regine Velasquez*	**TONE MAIBALIK**
	Tuloy Pa Rin Ako	*Side A/Labuyo*	**TONE TULOYPA**
	Can't Hold Us Down	*Christina Aguilera*	**TONE CANTHOLD**
	In Love	*Lisa Maffia*	**TONE INLOVE**
	Can't Get It Back	*Mis-teeq*	**TONE GETITBACK**
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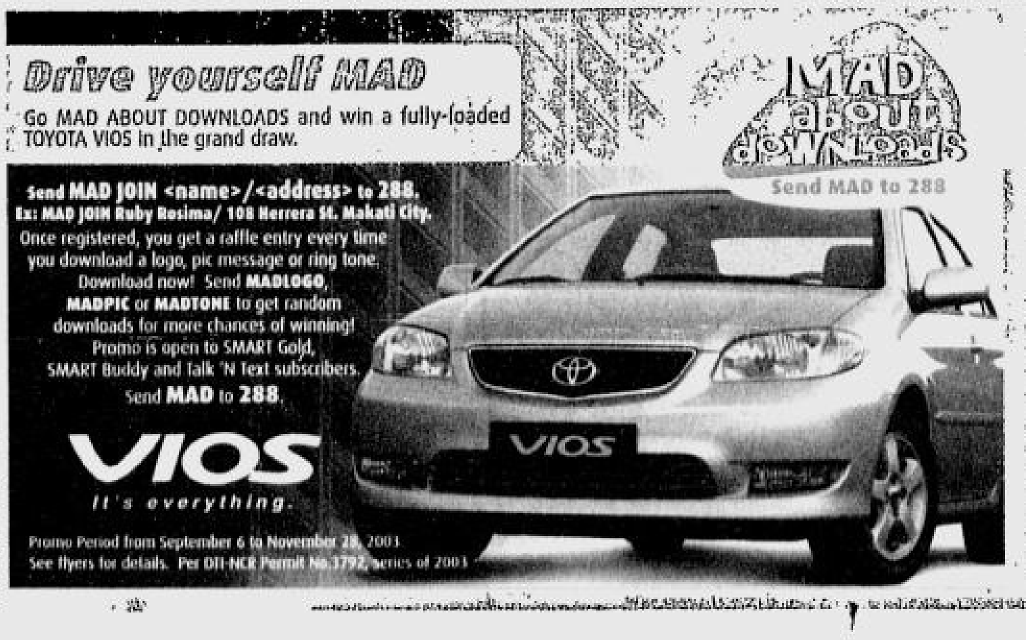
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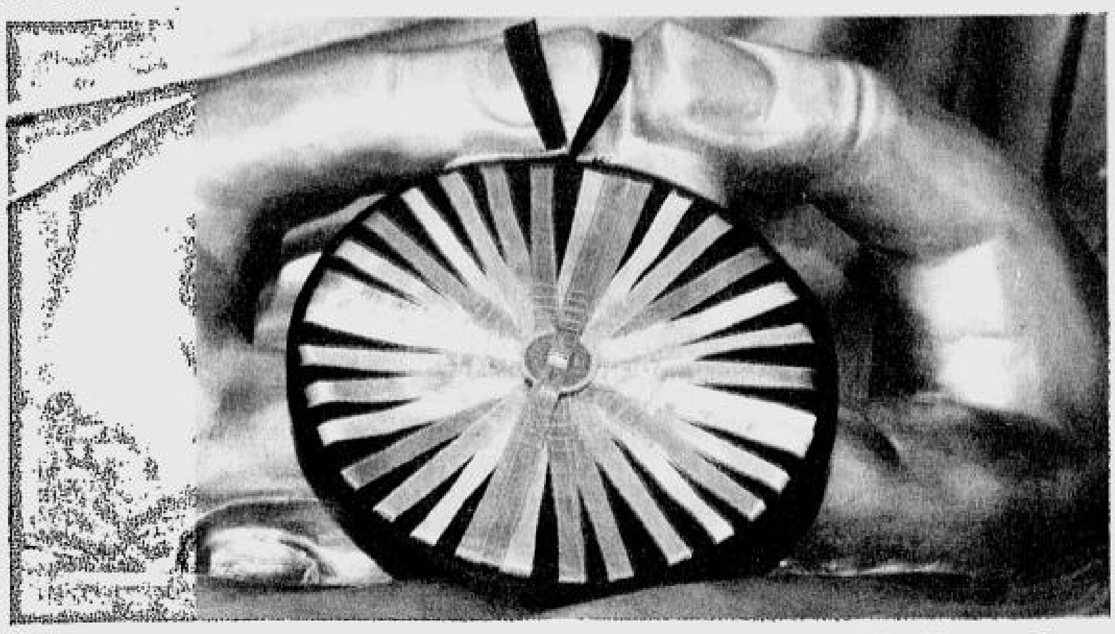
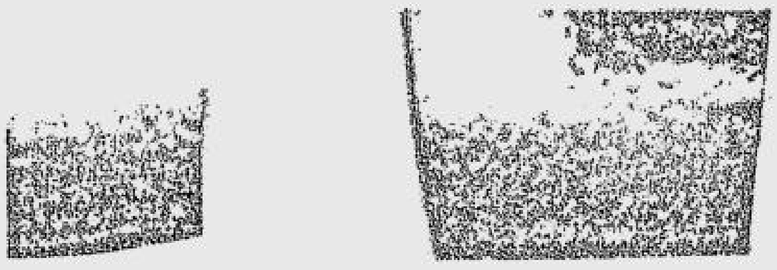


SHAOLIN. For the "well-rounded." Ghetto-fab with hoodies, club chic with stilettos, casual hip with cargos... The style possibilities are infinite.

KOI. Denim-perfect for sporty teeners whose "calling" is clubbing



YAKUZA. The fashion rebel's "talisman"

Bag hags!

From page C1

satin ribbons for the collection.

He also uses gold metal handles in two of the designs because "I like hardware." Thus the coins. "[The hardware] is the diversifying [and also] the unifying element."

Most of their materials are sourced in Divisoria. "Fame does all the haggling," says Magsaysay, laughingly adding that Lelis "capitalizes" on her *chinita* looks to get wholesale bargains. The latter is also studying business and computer applications.

Made-to-order

The made-to-order Fab Bag is crafted in their friend's factory, which manufactures corporate souvenir bags. The duo is quite happy and proud of the quality of their bags.

"Our friend is just as glad because the factory workers are also learning new skills through Fab," Magsaysay shares.

For what the twosome call couture bags, Fab creations are reasonably priced at P600-800. They don't want to hit the P1,000 price tag, "at least not yet."

Magsaysay and Lelis are only two of the now-growing breed of young designers-entrepreneurs. Their edge, they claim, is their predilection for outrageous-looking bags with unusual shapes. "And we're very keen with details," the young man stresses. "We make extraordinary pieces that we ourselves want as consumers"—true to Fab Bag's tagline, perhaps: "Every bag worth your grab."

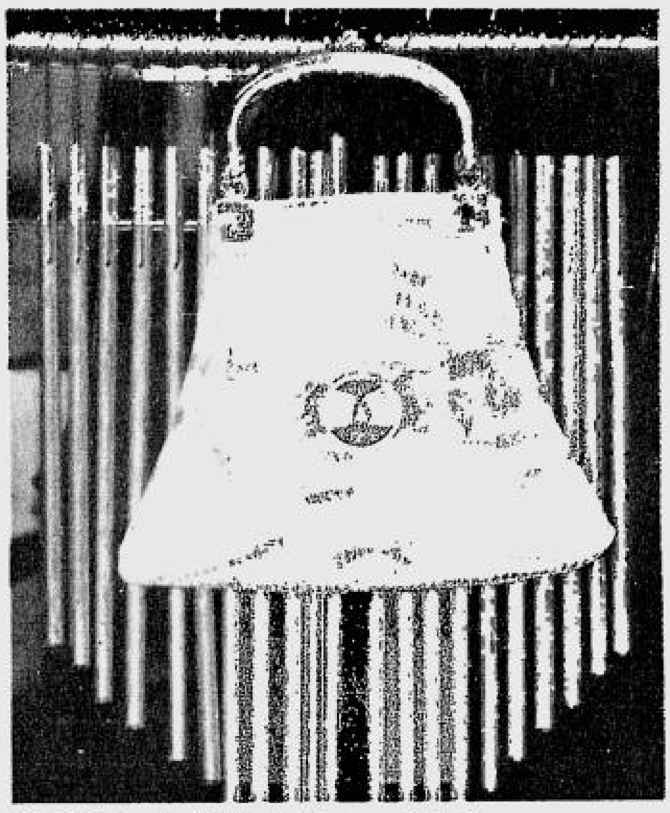
"We don't want to follow trends," says Magsaysay. "We like to be the pioneer and innovator, the trendsetter... Our aim is to make heirloom pieces."

Fab Bag has yet to take off but, perhaps owing to the daring and go-getting spirit of their youth, Magsaysay and Lelis, with some of their equally creative friends, are now cooking up more ambitious and exciting ventures to add to Fab.

While they would like to keep the kitties in the bag for now, the young entrepreneurs let us in on what to watch out for next: Fab Bag's vintage utilitarian and men's collections.

Call Fab Bag at (0916) 624-6166 (John) or (0917) 891-1488 (Fame)

E-mail the author at cmoral@inquirer.com.ph



PAGODA. For the Elle Woods, *kikay* types in the house

fab BAG

LOCATION. TEMPLE BAR, GREENBELT 2, MAKATI
THANKS TO ERIC CUA

Getting down and dirty in Corregidor

By Kristine Ching
2bU! Correspondent

I DIDN'T know what to expect when I joined the Oakley Bionetwork Challenge. I was looking for an adventure all right, but I thought it'd be as easy as the Girl Scout camp in sixth grade.

I did keep a mental list of things that I might be scared of based on past episodes of "Fear Factor" and "The Amazing Race," since the Challenge was patterned after both shows.

The race was held last Sept. 5 at the historic island of Corregidor. Ten Oakley endorsers—Gabby de la Merced, Tricia Chiongbian, Akiko Thomson, Dominic Ochoa, Diether Ocampo, Dino Guevarra (replacing Jake Roxas), Carlo Ledesma, Bobby Andrews, Geoff Briz and Brad Turvey—were each paired with a participant, five of whom were from the media: Michelle Katigbak, Jennifer Ong and Anna Kalaw from the Philippine Star; Pamela Ong from Mobile Media PH (replacing Yeng Lim of Manila Bulletin); and yours truly for INQUIRER.

The other five were certified Oakley consumers: mountaineer Jun Delmo, racing instructor Michael Yap, model Micah Muñoz, UP Dragonboat member Richelle Vibal and pre-school teacher Sian Lagdameo.

The race started with all 20 of us running around the Hospital Ruins, which also served as our pit stop, in search of our survival packs which held our first clue. The 10 teams were distributed into five legs—two teams per leg.

The legs varied in difficulty levels, and there were also mental challenges. My partner, Diether Ocampo, and I went through all of the physical and mental stuff. I was taking short breaks to catch my breath most of the time, but Diether was very cheerleader-y, pushing me to go on with his constant "Go, Kristine!" cheers.

THE AUTHOR
with game partner
Diether Ocampo

AKIKO Thomson and Micah Muñoz are all smiles as they are adjudged first place.

The Oakley Bionetwork Challenge was agonizing but fun. And I had Diether Ocampo for a partner!

We missed a part of one leg because we didn't go through "Dean End," where we had to dip our hands in a bucketful of guano to look for three rings. Thank goodness! There was also one leg where we were warned not to touch the walls because of this mysterious spider-scorpion hybrid that was supposed to cause a week's worth of fever when you got stung. My final exams were the Monday after the race, so I couldn't afford to get sick!

The race was agonizing. But now that it's over, I think it was actually fun—even if it was painful to walk for the next three days. As much as I want to remember all the details, I didn't even get a chance to remember which landmarks or buildings I got to visit, because I had to keep up with my very athletic partner all the time.

Outtakes and mistakes

At the party afterwards, I picked up some amusing moments from other teams.

The Pink team of Michelle Katigbak of Philippine Star and Dino Guevarra had a Globe moment when their flashlights conked out in the last leg of the race and they had to use their cell phones to get around the pitch-black tunnel.

Carlo Ledesma tricked his partner, Jennifer Ong of Philippine Star, to singing "Eternal Flame" in front of the camera. The route marker actually said they should go look for the Eternal Flame, but Carlo added the bit that the female member should sing "Eternal Flame."

To get out of the airshaft at the end of the Duck Walk Tunnel, which only had two topmost steps that I had to step on a wobbly stone to reach the opening, Diether had to push me out of the shaft. Turned out we didn't even have to go out of that hole. I am absolutely thankful it wasn't caught on camera!

Akiko Thomson was way ahead that she didn't even notice her partner, Micah Muñoz, falling behind because of cramps. Carlo Ledesma had to help out and call Akiko back to aid her partner.

Jay Ortega's band, Dirt, kept us entertained while the judges, marshals and everyone else were still checking our scores. There were some last-minute changes and penalties.

In the end, the Yellow team of Akiko Thomson and Micah Muñoz bagged the first prize for having completed all five legs in less than four hours. They both got tickets to South Africa courtesy of South African Airways and Oakley Crush watches.

Second place went to the Orange Team (Tricia Chioban and Michael Yap) who each got Oakley Ruby Red Juliets. The Magenta team of Bobby Andrews and Sian Lagdameo was third, and both of them got an Oakley Penny.

Prizes were also given to the teams with best times for each leg. Diether and I got Palawan trips, while both the Light Blue and Magenta teams got trips to Boracay. Trisha and Michael also won Pearl Farm trips, and the Black team of Carlo Ledesma and Jennifer Ong got the Subic trip.

The Oakley Bionetwork Challenge was sponsored by South African Airways, Air Philippines, Nature's Flow, National Sports Grill, R-II Builders Group of Companies and Wishcraft.

ALL lined up and ready to go, the participants listen to last-minute reminders from the race director.

TELLY WEEKLY

F4 members get individual shows

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

Asian Invasion

NOW that the Mexican invasion has eased, it is our Asian neighbors' turn to dominate our television screens. The Chinovela fever isn't ending with "Meteor Garden." F4 members are now starring separately in their own Chinovelas. The series "Chinese Ghost Story," for instance, (on cable), a period-piece starring Barbie Xu, will be seen on ABS-CBN.

And it isn't just the Taiwanese. Korean programs on the cable channel Arirang are getting a loyal following. The Korean series "Endless Love" is now on GMA 7.

Most of the shows are pretty entertaining, but they do remind us that 1) we easily embrace other countries' goods; and 2) our own efforts do not get as warm a reception here and abroad.

Pity vs talent

Pinoy amateur shows do not only showcase talent these days. For Regine and Mariah wannabes, the pity factor seems to figure prominently. Contestants, it appears, have to tell hurtful, pitiful, traumatic or heart-gripping experiences to qualify for talent shows.

So when a poor out-of-school youth who sells *bibingka* on weekends wins, some viewers are confused about the judges' criteria. I know such backgrounds melt viewers' hearts, but the contestants' economic status or family problems have nothing to do with talent.

Vidiot box

Thankfully, the Pinoy music industry has realized the importance of music videos judging by the number of music channels, awards for music videos and their creators, and, most importantly, music videos accompanying the release of new singles by OPM artists.

Newcomer Sarah Geronimo's technically first music video, "Forever's Not Enough," is out. Geronimo narrates how her crush, Mark, got her to audition for some gig and how the guy inspires her. She then bursts into a song, which fortunately isn't a Celine Dion rip-off, and gets a deafening applause at the end led by "Star for a Night" judge Arci something who, as usual, is in black.

Another teen star trying to replace her pop label for something she's really comfy with is Cris Villonco. For "Napapagod na Puso," Cris stars in a school play where she's paired with Gio Alvarez of "Ang TV" fame. Sparks fly and fortunately the vid ends sooner than you can name 30 kids from Ang TV.

Joining the R&B bandwagon is Arnee Hidalgo, Jeffrey's li'l sistah! For her carrier single "Cold Summer Nights" (it is fab but not as fab as Francis M's original version), she releases an accompanying vid with topless macho men, water everywhere and Arnee doing her best Ashanti impersonation.

Ad of the Moment

The latest Fita ad one has me doing somersaults in approval. Not only does it star our favorite moo-moo, it also teaches the value of sharing and selfless giving.

Duh ad of the Moment

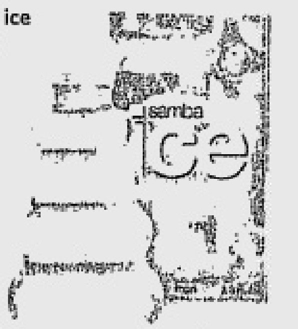
Many will vouch for how good Pond's products are. So they don't need a Spidey rip-off suddenly dropping from the ceiling to kiss a woman who has just used Pond's. What's next, the Incredible Hulk using a whitening product?

Cable gem

Thanks to CinemaOne, this generation has easy access to the masterpiece known as "Temptation Island." Full of campiness and quotable quotes, the movie is about four beauty pageant contestants who get stuck on an island with four men, including the gay co-chair of the contest. Because of differences in their beliefs, upbringing and attitudes, conflicts arise every 15 seconds. In short, *pa-bonggahan* abounds.

What is probably the funniest bit in the flick is when the gay commits suicide, is eaten for lunch by the others after some hesitation, then rescue arrives a nano-second later. Definitely a classic, "Temptation Island" is so hilarious and lots of fun to watch that I want a DVD copy of it.

E-mail the tempting author at katotino@yahoo.com



SAMBA ice for men

Scent of the Samba

THE SAMBA, full of life, passion and energy. This musical genré from Brazil is a fusion of great influences from around the world. It has the grace of European harmony, the rhythm of Cuban habanera and the beat of African tune, among others. It may acquire various characteristics on different occasions but one thing never changes, it symbolizes celebration.

The same spirit comes with every bottle of the Samba line of fragrances. Each of its men's and women's scents exudes the vibrant sounds and flavors of Brazilian music. And like Samba music's global inspiration, Samba scents are a mixture of different fragrances combined to give distinct experiences when worn, all guaranteed to accord the same festive soul of Rio de Janeiro's famous Mardi Gras.

Samba Red, available in both women's and men's variants, gives a feeling of sensuality. The red light district of fragrances, when sprayed, gives a seductive scent making you look blatantly sexy.

As cool as its name suggests, Samba Ice is a refreshing scent that comes in a variety for women and men. A fragrance on the rock that is both smooth and invigorating. This ice does not melt, but it melts the people around the person wearing it.

Accompanying the red light district of fragrances and the fragrance on the rocks is Samba French Kiss. French kisses are unlike any other kisses. This kiss blows you away. It makes your spectators' jaws drop in awe, shock or amazement. You can experience the same passionate moments of this kiss with every spritz of Samba French Kiss.

Every bottle of the three fragrances for men and women from the Samba line of—scents is fun, sexy, young and trendy. Most of all, the line is reasonably priced. You can experience the Samba spirit exclusively in all Rustan's (Cubao, Shangrila and Harrison Plaza) and Essences branches (Makati, Alabang and Robinson's Place).

Marie-France &
Facial Care Centre
with
Maxi-Media
International
Present
Martin Nievera
"The Road to Vegas"
Concert

Marie-France Bodyline and Facial Care Centre, the country's leading slimming and skincare centers, together with Maxi-Media International, recently presented another spectacular show from the Concert King himself!

The hugely successful "Martin Nievera: The Road to Vegas" concert was staged to jam-packed audiences last September 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 and 27, 2003 at Onstage, Greenbelt 1, Makati City. The Concert King regaled the crowd with his popular ballads, hit songs from famous Broadway musicals and, of course, the upbeat tunes of Las Vegas music favorites.

For 18 years in the Philippines, Marie-France stands above the rest and continues its success with its no-strain, no-pain slimming programme. It's the superior choice for women who want to slim down effortlessly and shape up effectively to reveal a sexier body.

On the other hand, Facial Care Centre is now celebrating 21 years as the pioneer in the skincare industry. Through its latest, most effective skincare treatments and products, women can experience "reverse ageing" with skin that's healthier, younger-looking, wrinkle-and-blemish-free.

For more details on our slimming and skincare services, contact the following numbers for an appointment to a free consultation: (Marie-France) 8161262 / (Facial Care Centre) 8161259.

Martin Nievera with Marie-France and Facial Care Centre promo girls at "The Road To Vegas" concert.

HORROR OGA
PUMPKIN BOY
ANGEL
WITCH
SPOOKTACULAR HALLOWEEN COSTUMES
AT THE CHILDREN'S WEAR & INFANTS WEAR DEPARTMENTS
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Pre-holiday collections give freedom and flexibility

Lora Gabol

You can explore and experiment, creating looks that are subtly striking for day and dramatic at night

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

OUT of all the makeup collections that get into shelves throughout the year, I seem to love the pre-holiday collections the most. It's probably because the colors and formulations are at the midpoint of the makeup spectrum—the products strike a balance between barely-there summer makeup and the all-out glam December palette.

You can have the flexibility to create looks that are subtly striking for day and dramatic at night. You have more freedom to experiment.

The biggest plus? Most of the products in these collections will stay in your kit long after the post-Christmas clearance sales—giving you absolute value for your money.

One of my personal favorites for the year is The Body Shop's Autumn Trend aptly called "Enchantment"—made up of shimmery hues lending an unreal, almost magical quality to any face. The Autumn 2003 Color Story plays with the contrast of light and shadows to transform a woman into a real-life fairy tale character (move over, Cinderella!).

What's more, all of the products from Body Shop's makeup line contain Marula Oil, proven to improve skin quality with every use. Smoother, softer skin from makeup? You just have to love this line!

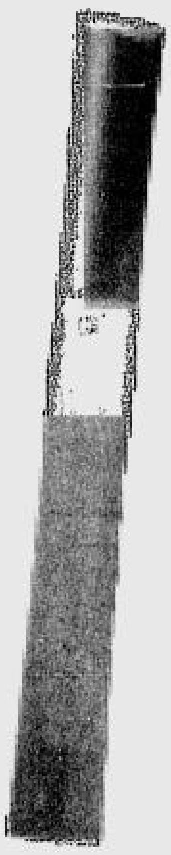
Shimmer Cubes 05 (P1,195). The stars of the Autumn Collection, these multitasking cubes of sheer shimmer can be used to add deep color or subtly highlight your eyes, cheeks, décolletage—virtually any place you want to shine!

The shades in the box of four individual cubes blend fabulously onto any skin tone (whether you're pale, tanned or olive) and look good under any light. The glimmer doesn't leave a disco-ball shine, but reflects light to brighten the face. I love the plum shade—one swipe is light enough for that lunch date, a couple more perfect for clubbing till dawn.

At a little over a thousand bucks, these Shimmer Cubes are a steal (that's four colors in one box: Dark Brown, Pearly Calico, Golden Brown, Plum). Definite must-haves for any time of the year, grab one of these before they run out (Read: Limited Edition)!

Lip Colour + Liner (P595). One of the newest products under The Body Shop's new line, the Lip Colour + Liner is fast becoming a huge favorite among "multi-taskers" (TBS just loves cooking up these fab two-in-one ideas!).

Another innovation for women who can't have too many products in their purses, the Lip Colour + Liner has a retractable lipstick on one end and a lip liner on the other for ultimate convenience, even on the go. My personal pick is Cinnamon/Spice 01, the perfect combo for beautiful neutral lips. Also available in 02 Fig/Wine and 02 Bilberry/Cassis.

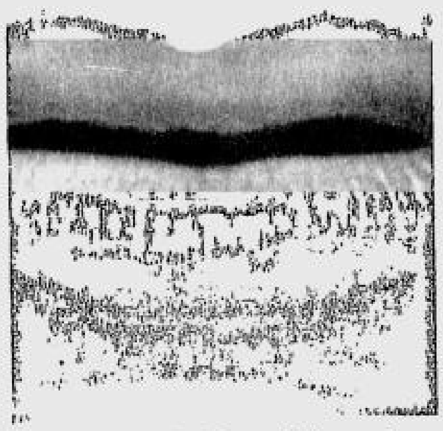


THE BODY Shop's Lip + Cheek Stain

Lip + Cheek Stain (P550). Having been a huge fan of the first lip and cheek stain that The Body Shop came out with some years back, I was pretty disappointed to discover they phased it out when the new makeup line was launched.

But the moment I was introduced to the new formulation, however, I fell in love again. I was especially delighted with this season's new shades. I've been wanting a reddish liquid stain that won't overpower my face for some time now, so the Sun Red Lip and Cheek stain arrived on my dresser right on time. Blends evenly, doesn't streak and moisturize, get yourself your stash (before others raid the stores) in either Sun Red or Berry.

Eyebrow Kit (P550). Many women are thanking God for the relaunch of this old hit! Have perfectly groomed arches (whether you've overplucked or not!) with the new Brown-Brunette eyebrow palette that's bound to match your color with just the right blending. Use light strokes to fill in sparse areas and watch those brows come back to life!



GO for lip color that's dramatic but won't overpower your face.

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on great selections [illegible]
— THE —
PODIUM
18 adb avenue, ortigas center
WAVE 89.1
Jam 88.3 your kind of mix
DISCOVERY Suites
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-626, Series of 2003

KUYA Erwin, me, Dea, Ma'am Leigh and Natasha

TEMPORARILY YOURS

Conquering the espresso machine

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

RECORDER. Check. Camera. Check. Notebook. Check.

It was seven in the morning, and I was dressed in black from head to toe, mentally reviewing the Seattle's Best menu and how many shots of coffee it took to make a short mocha (one), a tall cappuccino (two) and a grande espresso (three). The Javanilla shake got one dollop of whipped cream; all the others needed a full rosette.

Do not be afraid of the steamer, I told myself. Now is not the time to look like an idiot. I took a deep breath and marched into Seattle's Best and introduced myself to Ma'am Leigh, my, ahem, supervisor, who informed me that Ma'am Joi Meneses, the marketing assistant, was on her way.

Relieved at the added minutes of prep time, I sank into a comfy armchair and surveyed the area that I would soon be manning. At this time of the day, customers came in trickles, and I couldn't help but pray that they wouldn't come in droves. It was my first—and only—day after all; I'd like to make it as painless as possible for me and my co-workers.

As a regular coffee shop patron, I have often found myself wondering what it would be like to be on the other side of the counter, where I would be making the drinks instead of ordering them. I imagined myself in an apron, working beside the coffee machine and yelling "One short cappuccino for Ryan!" in the characteristic barista twang.

The place to be

Compared to most jobs in the food and beverage industry, baristas enjoy a somewhat elevated status in the eyes of society. And this is all because coffee shops are now viewed as the place to see and be seen.

Thanks to designer cafes, what was once treated as a simple stimulant is now a billion-dollar institution that has fortunately paved the way for more jobs. Fresh graduates now easily gain employment in a place they also often frequent.

Michelle David, marketing manager of Seattle's Best, says many young people want to work in cafés perhaps because the job looks prestigious. The yuppie-like accents and coffee know-how somehow make baristas a select group of initiates, in a class all by themselves.

During my training day a week before, Ma'am Joi explained to me that baristas usually undergo a two-week training period. Barista wannabes need to know their FAABs; that is, they have to be able to determine the flavor, aroma, acidity and body of every coffee product.

It seems like every coffee lover's dream job. He or she also gets into role-playing situations that require practiced responses to customer complaints. When whiny patrons make a fuss, baristas are told not to argue and just immediately change the coffee.

After their training, baristas have to take written and oral exams. These tests are also necessary for eventual retentions and promotions within the company.

There can be as many as six baristas in the café at once: Two for the cash registers, two for the coffee machines and for releasing the orders, one for the lobby to take care of guests and the merchandise, and the manager, who has a floating schedule and can substitute for any absentee.

X-factor

The average full-time barista earns around P8,000 a month, although coffee shops like Seattle's Best also take in part-timers, usually students trying to make extra cash.

The American accent you hear is due to the fact that many of the applicants are from private schools like Ateneo and La Salle. But in fact, the ability to speak the customer's language is preferred over the ability to speak accented English, so if you're a customer, do not be afraid to speak in Tagalog when placing your order.

Most baristas are young, around 18-24 years old, and a lot are loyal coffee customers themselves. According to Ma'am Joi, the applicants who get the job are those with a certain "X-factor." They must also be really passionate about the job, since they have to show up even on holidays when business is at its peak.

But is it really a glamorous job? When asked why they want the job, most applicants say, "*Masaya eh!*" True, the job is fun, but it is also hard work—or so I'd been told many

CONQUERING/ D4

JAY R
GAMEFACE
PRESENTS
MUSIC

WHAT'S ON at Robinsons

JAY R

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ROBINSONS Malls

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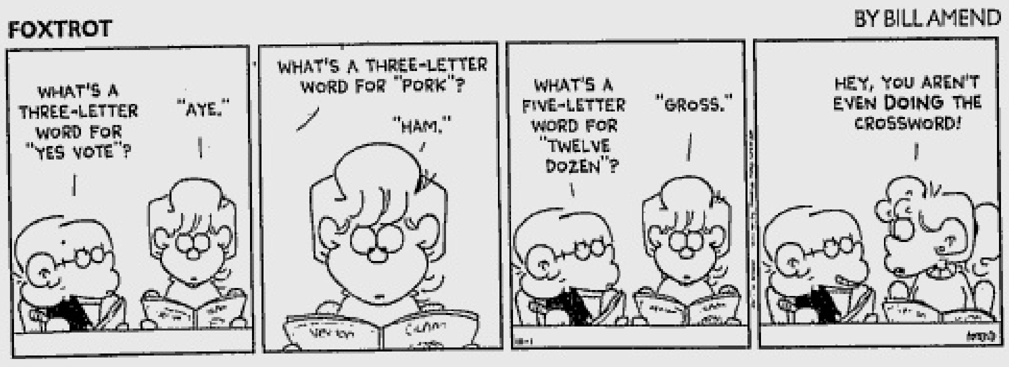
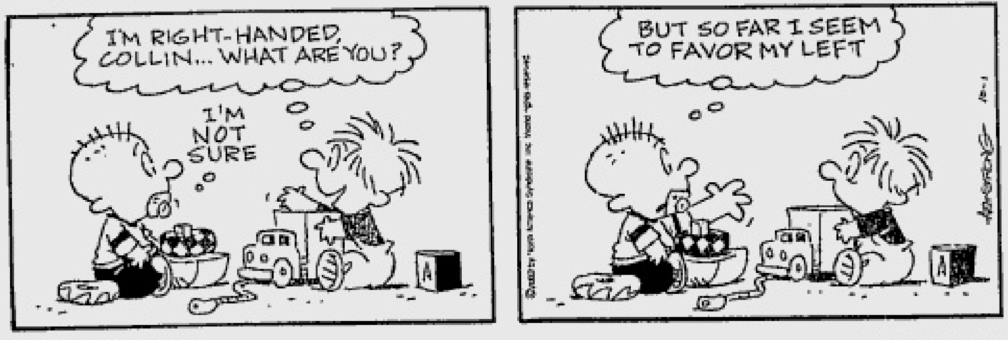
SMART Simply Amazing! Review ★★★★★

See flyers for details.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2817, Series of 2003.

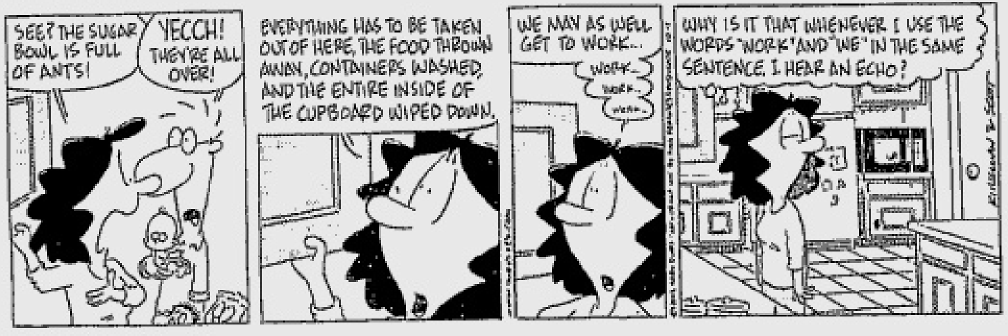
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


WHAT'S A THREE-LETTER WORD FOR "YES VOTE"?
"AYE."
WHAT'S A THREE-LETTER WORD FOR "PORK"?
"HAM."
WHAT'S A FIVE-LETTER WORD FOR "TWELVE DOZEN"?
"GROSS."
HEY, YOU AREN'T EVEN DOING THE CROSSWORD!

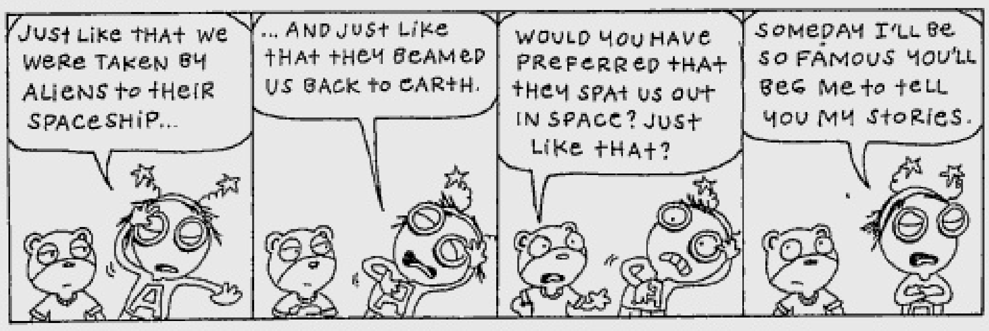
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M RIGHT-HANDED, COLLIN... WHAT ARE YOU?
I'M NOT SURE
BUT SO FAR I SEEM TO FAVOR MY LEFT

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


SEE? THE SUGAR BOWL IS FULL OF ANTS!
YECCH! THEY'RE ALL OVER!
EVERYTHING HAS TO BE TAKEN OUT OF HERE, THE FOOD THROWN AWAY, CONTAINERS WASHED, AND THE ENTIRE INSIDE OF THE CUPBOARD WIPED DOWN.
WE MAY AS WELL GET TO WORK...
WORK... WORK... WERK...
WHY IS IT THAT WHENEVER I USE THE WORDS "WORK" AND "WE" IN THE SAME SENTENCE, I HEAR AN ECHO?

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Just like that we were taken by aliens to their spaceship...
... and just like that they beamed us back to earth.
Would you have preferred that they spat us out in space? Just like that?
Someday I'll be so famous you'll beg me to tell you my stories.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a fine mind. You are often dedicated to a cause. Your perseverance and intelligence often take you to the top of your field. Nevertheless, you are unique and often quite unorthodox. You march to your own drummer. Expect increased solitude this year because you have something important to learn.
Birthdate of: Walter Matthau, actor; Jimmy Carter, 39th US president; Randy Quaid, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're interested in politics, foreign countries and religious ideas today. What is at the bottom of this is a desire to travel and learn more about life.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): If you make an effort to look for answers, you will find them today. This could be related to mundane affairs like bills and insurance matters, or juicy gossip about other people.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): A close friend or partner is willing to help you today. Sometimes it is harder to receive than it is to give. Let others have the chance to be generous.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Anything you do today that helps you get better organized at work or at home will make you feel good. Just do something to better organize your daily clutter. We all have clutter.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Parties, flirtations, creative escapes and playful times with children appeal to you today. You might not be able to do these things; so fake it as best you can.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Plan to stay at home, if you can, to do extra work. Use your energy to cooperate with family members or to make things run more smoothly.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Visits with neighbors, siblings and friends could yield juicy gossip today. Secrets are exciting. Especially if you have someone you can tell them to.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You might be pleased with shopping, buying and selling, or wheeling and dealing with financial matters and goods. Everything having to do with money interests you today.

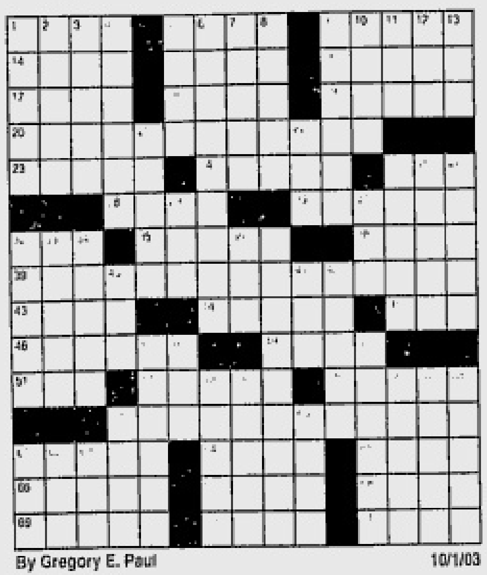
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): The Moon is in your sign today. Enjoy the company of others! Whatever you do, you have a slight edge over everybody else now. Why not go out in full dazzle?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You need some special quiet time today just to be by yourself. Do anything that helps you to replenish, restore and regenerate your energy, both mentally and physically.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Time spent with friends is time well-spent today. You are a wonderful networker. This is a good day to test your skills. People want to be in your presence.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Discussions with authority figures, parents and bosses are significant today. People are beginning to respect you more. Good for you.

DAILY CROSSWORD

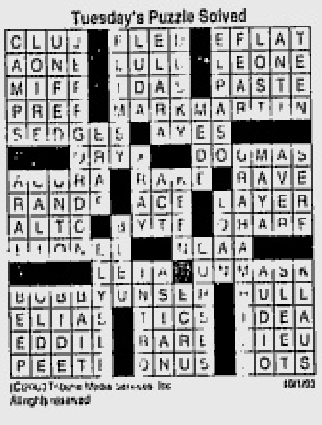


By Gregory E. Paul
Scottdale, PA
10/1/03

ACROSS
1 Special-interest grps.
5 Red planet
9 Vote in
14 Dismounted
15 Laptop image
16 Fashion magazine
17 Roam
18 Sp. maiden
19 Succumb to time and tide
20 With 59A, homemaker?
23 Cleave in two
24 Kind of release or box
25 NYC arena
28 Cogito __ sum
30 Courteous
32 "Cakes and __"
35 "48 Hrs." star
38 Winglike structures
39 Homemaker?
43 God of Spain
44 Beet extract
45 That woman
46 Sandinista leader
49 Rugged cliff
51 Born in Paris
52 Much less cordial
55 Dark olive brown
59 See 20A
61 Jeweler's weight
64 Alda of "M*A*S*H"
65 Painful
66 Completely developed
67 Appendage
68 Age after Bronze
69 Fictional Montague
70 Peak in Thessaly
71 Elizabeth of "Lone Star"

DOWN
1 Make thirsty
2 Hilo hello
3 Courteous
4 Loading derrick
5 Catchall abbr.
6 Parthenon site
7 Chopper feature
8 Slithering hisser
9 Nevertheless
10 "The __ of the Rings"
11 Freudian topic
12 Bovine chew
13 Driver's peg
21 Spore-producing plants
22 Eurasian viper
25 Trumpeter Davis
26 Hidden store
27 Gaggle group
29 Obtained
31 Glasgow boy
32 Expansion component
33 French river
34 Ham it up
36 Fort Worth sch.
37 Fountain treats
40 Language suffix
41 Rower's need
42 Serious story
47 Florentine painter
48 Perform
50 Spread rumors
53 Writer Calvino
54 Perry or Havelock
56 Routine duty
57 Wading bird
58 Hippodrome
59 Hay unit
60 Hoops grp.
61 Ford or Dodge
62 Fuss
63 Zombie ingredient

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



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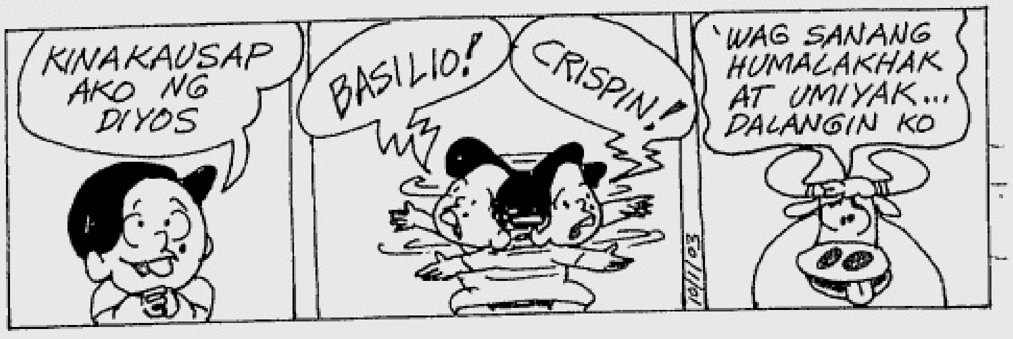
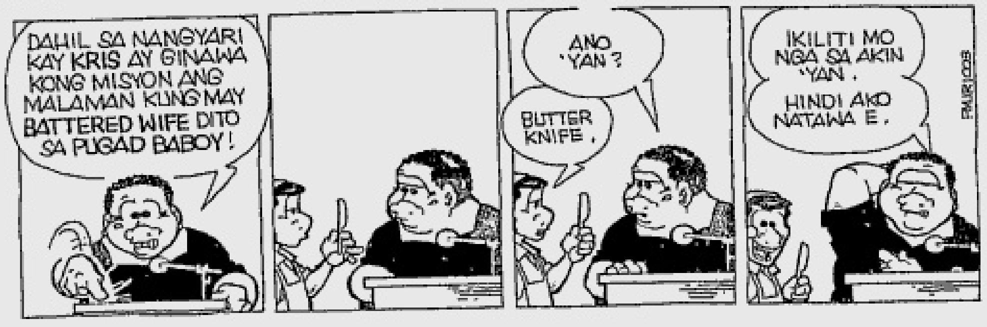
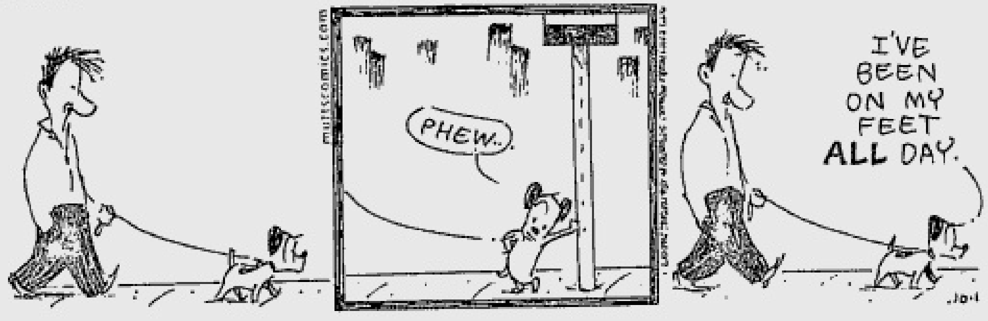
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


KINAKAUSAP AKO NG DIYOS
BASILIO!
CRISPIN!
'WAG SANANG HUMALAKHAK AT UMIYAK... DALANGIN KO
10/1/03

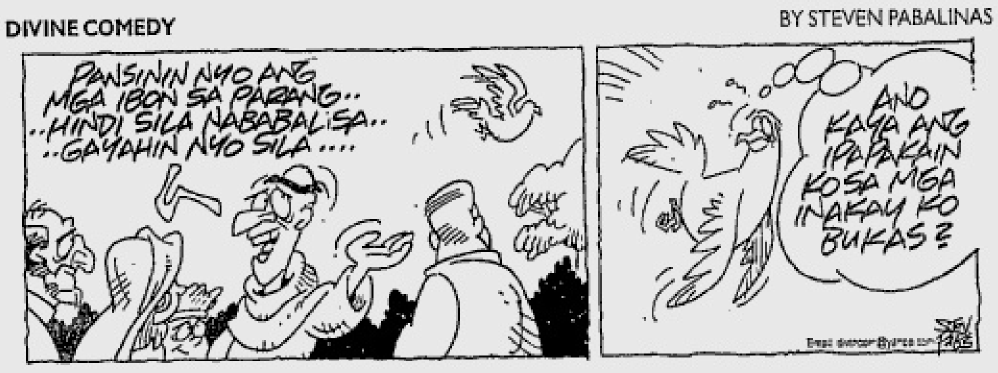
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


DAHIL SA NANGYARI KAY KRIS AY GINAWA KONG MISYON ANG MALAMAN KUNG MAY BATTERED WIFE DITO SA PUGAD BABOY!
ANO 'YAN?
BUTTER KNIFE.
IKILITI MO NGA SA AKIN 'YAN.
HINDI AKO NATAWA E.

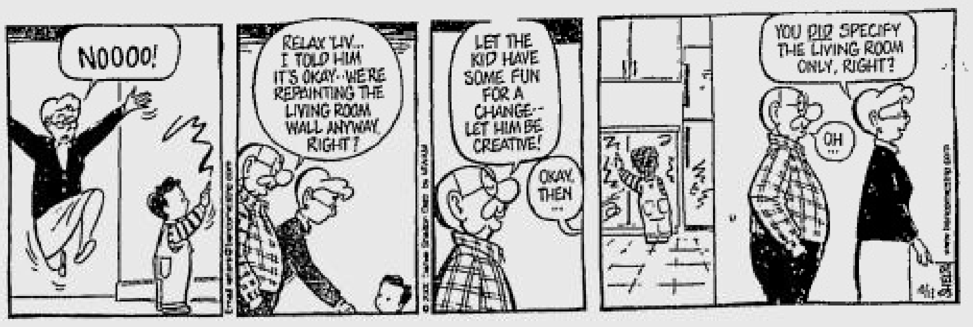
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


muttscomics.com
PHEW..
I'VE BEEN ON MY FEET ALL DAY.

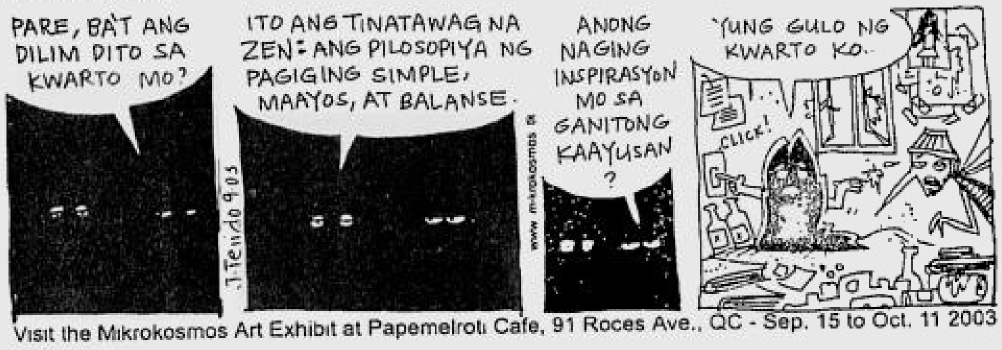
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


PANSININ NYO ANG MGA IBON SA PARANG.. ..HINDI SILA NABABALISA.. ..GAYAHIN NYO SILA....
ANO KAYA ANG IPAPAKAIN KO SA MGA INAKAY KO BUKAS?

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

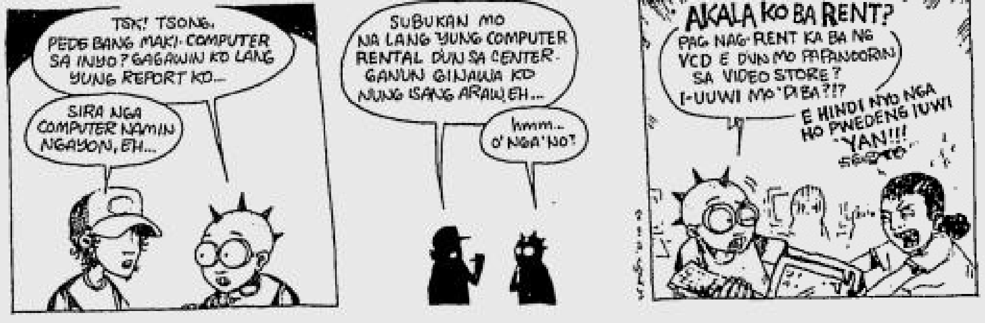

NOOOO!
RELAX, LIV... I TOLD HIM IT'S OKAY--WE'RE REPAINTING THE LIVING ROOM WALL ANYWAY, RIGHT?
LET THE KID HAVE SOME FUN FOR A CHANGE-- LET HIM BE CREATIVE!
OKAY, THEN ...
YOU DID SPECIFY THE LIVING ROOM ONLY, RIGHT?
OH ...

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

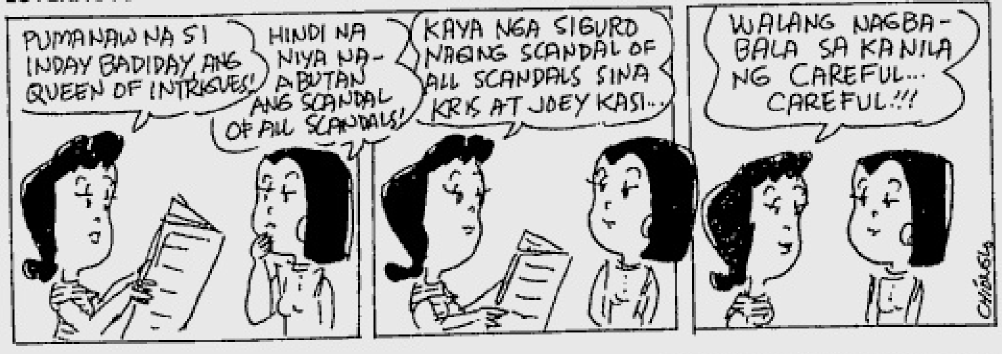

PARE, BA'T ANG DILIM DITO SA KWARTO MO?
ITO ANG TINATAWAG NA ZEN: ANG PILOSOPIYA NG PAGIGING SIMPLE, MAAYOS, AT BALANSE.
ANONG NAGING INSPIRASYON MO SA GANITONG KAAYUSAN?
'YUNG GULO NG KWARTO KO.
CLICK!

Visit the Mikrokosmos Art Exhibit at Papemelroti Cafe, 91 Roces Ave., QC - Sep. 15 to Oct. 11 2003

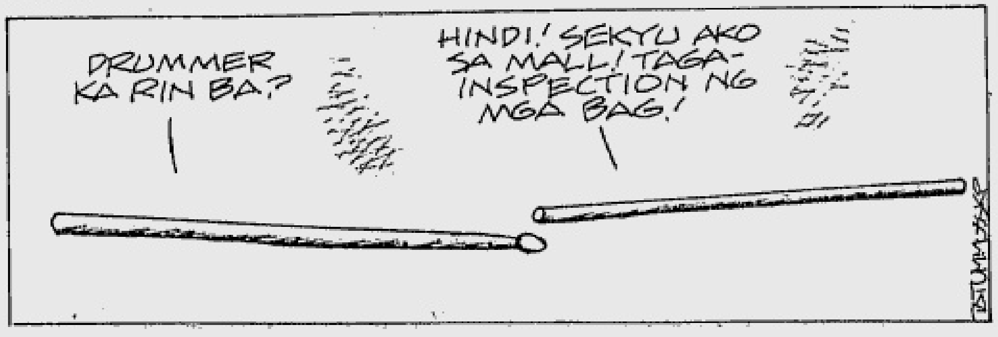
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK! TSONG. PEDE BANG MAKI-COMPUTER SA INYO? GAGAWIN KO LANG YUNG REPORT KO...
SIRA NGA COMPUTER NAMIN NGAYON, EH...
SUBUKAN MO NA LANG YUNG COMPUTER RENTAL DUN SA CENTER. GANUN GINAWA KO NUNG ISANG ARAW, EH...
hmm... O' NGA 'NO?
AKALA KO BA RENT?
PAG NAG-RENT KA BA NG VCD E DUN MO PAPANOORIN SA VIDEO STORE? I-UUWI MO 'DI BA?!?
E HINDI NYO NGA HO PWEDENG IUWI 'YAN!!!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PUMANAW NA SI INDAY BADIDAY, ANG QUEEN OF INTRIGUES!
HINDI NA NIYA NA-ABUTAN ANG SCANDAL OF ALL SCANDALS!
KAYA NGA SIGURO NAGING SCANDAL OF ALL SCANDALS SINA KRIS AT JOEY KASI...
WALANG NAGBABALA SA KANILA NG CAREFUL... CAREFUL!!!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DRUMMER KA RIN BA?
HINDI! SEKYU AKO SA MALL! TAGA-INSPECTION NG MGA BAG!

Ex-BF seeing new girl but 'doesn't want to lose' her

Niño Mark Sablan & September Mahino

DEAR Mark and Sep,

Late last month, my boyfriend of seven months and I broke up. I must admit that somehow it was really my fault.

I already apologized to him. He told me that he still loved me but not as much as before. I asked him to give me a chance to make things up to him but he told me he's not ready for that.

We still go out once in a while. He remains sweet and caring when we're together but, unlike before, I rarely hear him say the magic words "I love you." I often text him to check on him but he ignores me.

It's like he's my boyfriend when we're together and he's not when we're apart. Recently, he confessed something that really hurt me. He told me he's dating somebody else and he's starting to fall for her but he said he didn't want to lose me. He told me he still loved me.

I was confused, I didn't know what to feel. I felt betrayed. I asked him if he could stop dating the other girl in the meantime and give our relationship a chance. Maybe we could still work things out but, unfortunately, he said he couldn't. He's not ready for anything yet as of now.

I know he still loves me, I can feel that. But why can't he give up this girl for me? I really love this guy. I don't want to lose him. I know we can still work things out if he will only give our relationship a chance. What should I do?

LADY DIANE

He doesn't want to lose you, but he doesn't want to give your relationship a chance. Oh, and he doesn't want to let go of the new girl he's dating, too. Now that's a major a-hole. Not only is he a liar for telling you that he loves you, he is also extremely unfair for stringing you along, making you some kind of a safety net, just in case the new girl drops him like a hot piece of twister fries.

Do yourself a major favor and move on, the way he clearly has. You say you still love him and he says he still loves you, but what guy, who supposedly still loves a girl, wouldn't reconcile with her even when she is already down on her scraped knees?

Are you martyr enough to be number two? Don't you have anything better to do than tag along? Are you ready to be shamed when he finally picks the other girl after taking you on a bumpy ride?

He doesn't want to give you another chance. That should be enough for you to do the twist or go have twister fries with someone else.

I almost forgot, he's just saying "I love you" so you won't commit suicide.

MARK

Whatever you did that caused your break-up must have been pretty major because it seems to me that your ex is out for revenge.

There are signs you should have noted before believing everything he has been telling you. First, the split happened only recently. While there are people capable of handling the pain in order to save a relationship, there are those who can't wait to get back at the people who hurt them. By the looks of it, the mixed messages you're getting from your ex tend to show he is not one for bearing the pain to save a relationship.

Second, even if we assume it's not in your former dude's nature to hit back, there is still his split personality. If he could be mature enough to spend time with you, how come he couldn't be polite enough to respond to text messages? It's hard to believe that anybody can be soooo undecided about something as serious as spending time with a very recent ex.

Sweet and caring when he's with you? I think he's just offering more bait before the final blow. Or maybe he just did. Just remember how he figuratively dangled in front of you those three little words that you wanted to hear again for so long before he finally said them but, almost in the same breath, adding "Oh and yeah, I'm seeing someone else *pala*."

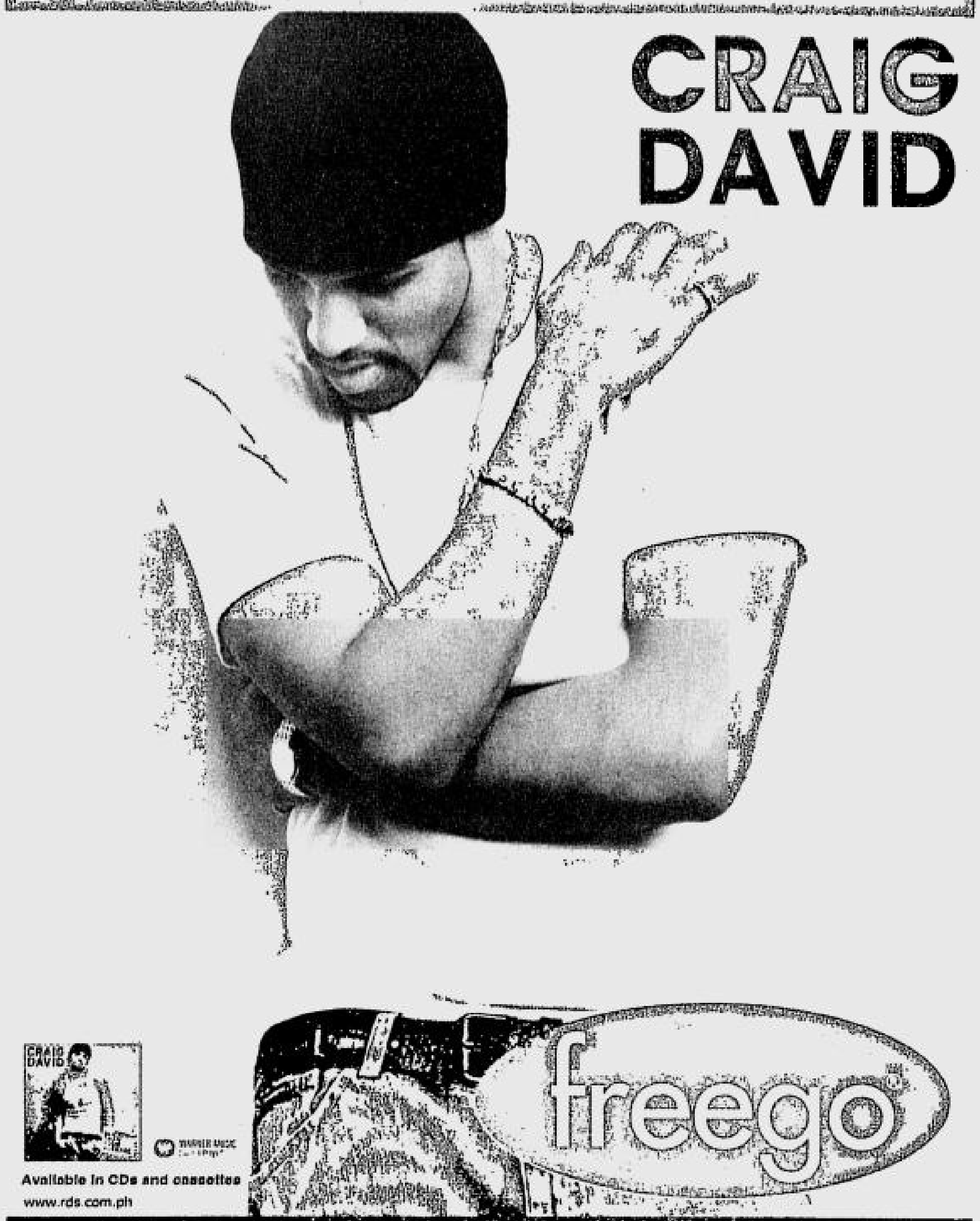
Dear, your ex has to be either a lost soul who doesn't know what he wants and how to get it, or he is one sadistic son of a b--ch who wants you to pay.

Whatever the case is, you're emotional health would be better served without him. In fact, you're better off without him.

While you truly believe that your love would be sufficient to make things work out, all your efforts would still be wasted because you're with someone who doesn't want the same thing. Let him go. You deserve someone better.

SEPTEMBER

E-mail the writers at markandsep@yahoo.com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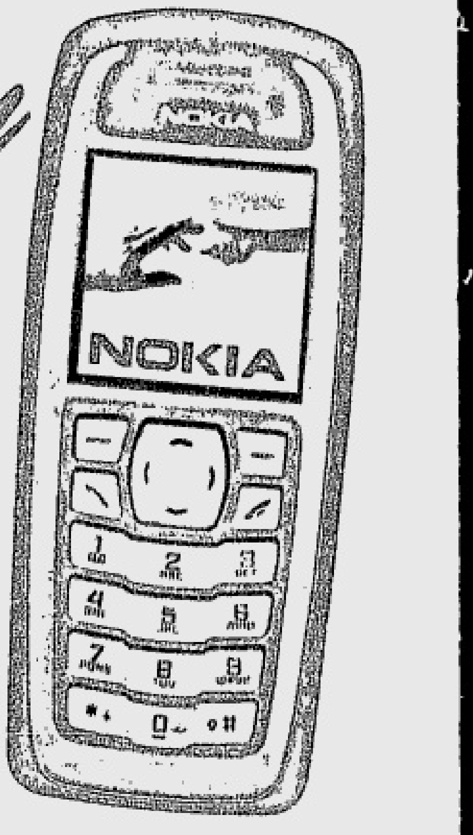


The Nokia 3100 only weighs 85 grams, but is packed with high-end features to make you giddy all day

By Jason Doplito
2bU! Correspondent

LIGHT doesn't necessarily mean expensive. This is what Nokia proves as it unveils its latest mobile phone, the Nokia 3100.

Launched through its "Illuminate your lifestyle" campaign, this mobile phone only weighs 85 grams and is purported to be the lightest in the market. And while technological gadgets have to shrink to near-atomic proportions to achieve this lightness, the 3100 breaks this myth because its keypad is still large enough for average-sized adults to thumb through.

Targeted at the youth market because of its hip and candy-colored case design, this mobile phone also boasts of a glow-in-the-dark cover that lasts up to 30 minutes in dim environments. It has a colored animated screensaver, also a first among other cellphones. And when you receive a call or an SMS, its backlight flashes in tune with the phone's melody!

Indeed, this phone is so perky it'll probably drive your rainy blues away.

But that's not to say the 3100 is all fluff and has none of the actual important features. The rage in mobile phones today is the camera feature, and yes, this particular phone has that. Although not built-in, the Nokia Fun Camera (bought separately) is packed with handsome features like flash and 8MB of memory.

This means you can take pictures in the dark and store up to 50 images without using up your phone's memory. The screen resolution is also of the same class as other MMS-capable (multimedia messaging) mobiles in the country.

It also supports 4096 colors within 128 x 128 pixels. In basic mode, it displays five lines of text with a 16-pixel font, big enough for you to read without getting eyestrain.

Many firsts

Speaking of MMS, it can receive messages with text, audio and image attachments with a maximum size of 45kb. At the same time, these respective attachments can be saved as wallpapers or ringing tones if desired.

For text messages, you can write up to six linked messages in one sending (equivalent to 885 characters). And to keep up with your prepaid account, the phone has a message counter that keeps track of how many SMS you've sent, as well to whom you've sent them.

Another first for this phone is the smileys in the message editor that make it easier for users to insert emoticons in their text. Most people, though, can do away with this feature, as it uses up a number of characters.

In terms of connectivity, this phone won't be left behind either. With the Nokia PC Suite, you can send and receive more pictures and graphics. To connect with your own personal computer, you can use the connectivity cable DKU-5. And as it is equipped with WAP/GPRS technology, the 3100 can also download Java applications of up to 64kb per download.

All in all, it can save up to 384kb of applications. If preferred, you can make room for other applications by deleting pre-downloaded programs in the mobile's memory. Meanwhile, with its XHTML browser, certain WAP-sites are easier to navigate because their layout on the phone's monitor appears more appealing and organized, a move closer to the look and feel of real Internet browsing.

But the best feature of the Nokia 3100 is its value. Priced at roughly P11,000, this makes the mobile the most affordable tri-band phone available. The only downside is that it doesn't appear professional-looking because of its toy-like lightness.

But the features installed in this phone are no different from the higher-end mobiles in the market, so consumers who don't care about appearances wouldn't have a hard time choosing this model.

Other features include the handsfree speaker mode, adjustable display brightness control, and SMS email. It has three games available: the Beach Rally, Snake Ex2 and Bowling. The battery lasts up to 2-6 hours (talk time) and 3-5 days on standby time.

Conquering the espresso machine

A certified coffee lover finds herself behind the counter for a change, working as a one-day ersatz barista

From page D1

times.

Well, here I was, ready to find out for myself in a few minutes.

Protocol

Since the two-week training was shortened to one day for me, working the cash register was out of the question. I was then instructed to man the espresso machine. After briefly practicing with the portafilters, which looked like ice-cream scoopers except that they had spouts at the bottom, I slowly got the hang of the routine.

The general protocol was to stick the filter in the coffee bean container, dispense the dry coffee according to the number of shots required per drink, lock the filter in the espresso machine, and press the button. The now-liquid coffee would then trickle down to a little pitcher.

During the waiting time, I had to partially fill the cup with a prepared basal mix, and then steam it to an exact temperature. Extra touches such as whipped cream and chocolate sticks were, of course, added last.

After the drink was done, the name of the customer was called out, and the next order was made.

In working the coffee machine, I discovered the essence of speed in addition to being meticulous in preparing the drinks. There is only a few seconds' holding time for the newly filtered coffee. Beyond that, the shot is considered spoiled and a new one would have to be prepared.

The stress of mixing espresso drinks while at the same time charming the customers takes its toll on you after a few hours. In the beginning, it was relatively easy, since there were only few customers in the shop.

By mid-morning, when the lines were longer, I suddenly found myself preparing four drinks at once. My obsessive-compulsive relationship with the espresso machine dissipated as the cups waiting for me multiplied. Soon, I was preparing drinks in less than a minute.

The initial shyness with hollering the customer's name also disappeared, as I just wanted the people to come over and get their drinks pronto. We had a group of young Japanese customers with cool names like "Hitomi." Some names were unisex, so I finally stopped using the honorifics "ma'am" and "sir."

Once, I even accidentally yelled "Mau" when the name of the customer was actually Mae. Geez. So stress does increase near-sightedness.

During slow periods, it was interesting to observe the customers. Two old gentlemen sat with newspapers and talked in between sips of coffee. A college student sat by the window, reading "Love in the Time of Cholera" by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. A mother-and-daughter duo enjoyed each other's company, the latter possibly taking a breather from school. Two career women in killer heels talked about business matters.

It was an interesting mix of different people who remained oblivious to each other's existence, and only we, the baristas, could observe them silently and wonder.

Encouraging

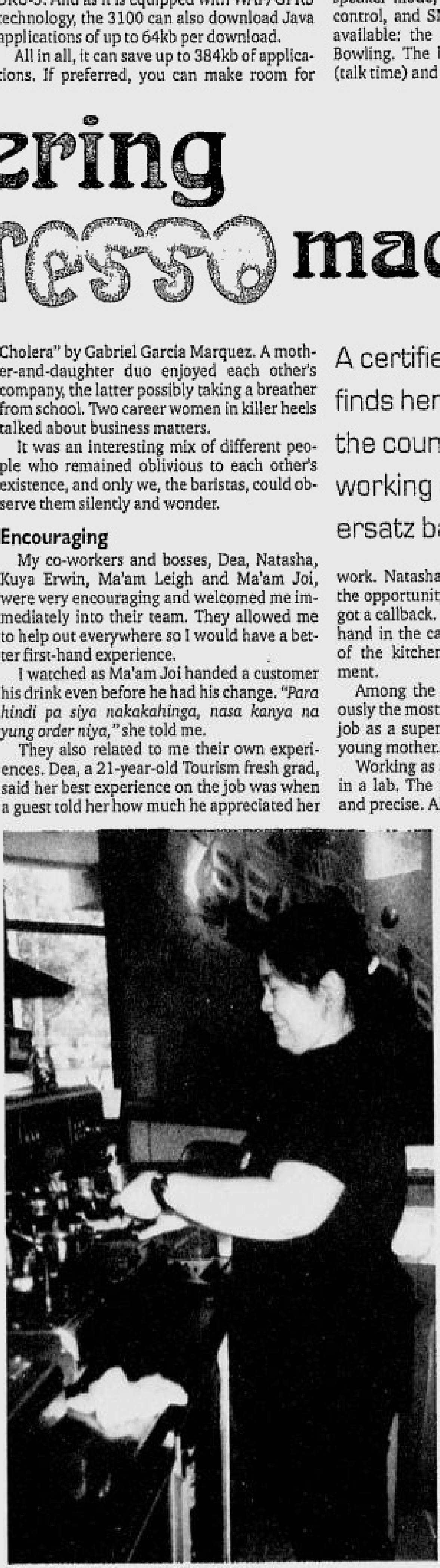
My co-workers and bosses, Dea, Natasha, Kuya Erwin, Ma'am Leigh and Ma'am Joi, were very encouraging and welcomed me immediately into their team. They allowed me to help out everywhere so I would have a better first-hand experience.

I watched as Ma'am Joi handed a customer his drink even before he had his change. *"Para hindi pa siya nakakahinga, nasa kanya na yung order niya,"* she told me.

They also related to me their own experiences. Dea, a 21-year-old Tourism fresh grad, said her best experience on the job was when a guest told her how much he appreciated her work. Natasha, an HRM graduate, grabbed the opportunity to be a barista as soon as she got a callback. Kuya Erwin was the all-around hand in the café—busing tables, taking care of the kitchen and fixing damaged equipment.

Among the team, Ma'am Leigh was obviously the most overworked, as she juggles her job as a supervisor with being a wife and a young mother.

Working as a barista is like being a chemist in a lab. The methods have to be antiseptic and precise. All containers have to be labeled not just with the drink it's holding, but also when it was prepared. Some drinks even need to be weighed.


ME and the espresso machine

Boots are recommended to protect the barista's feet—not from dangerous chemicals, but from the intense heat of the coffee that can go as high as 160°C. The main difference is that the product is actually non-toxic and edible. In fact, one of the perks of baristas is that they can have one drink on the house every day.

Now I am jealous. Having finished my one-day experience, I am sorely tempted these days to hand in my resumé just to do the barista bit again.

Working in a café is, at the very least, quite like an anthropological journey. Not only do you get to enjoy your work and gain friends, you can also observe snippets of society and find out for yourself just how it is to work in surely one of the most dominant institutions in modern life: The café.

Thank you to Seattle's Best Megastrip, Joi Meneses, Michelle David and Sahlee Pastoral.

E-mail the author at cathy_young1@yahoo.com

LIFESTYLE

2BU! FASHION FREAKS

Our shopping cart exposed

Well-designed jeans, flipflops and crystals make their fashion mark

By Jason Doplito and Pam Pastor
Photos by Pam Pastor

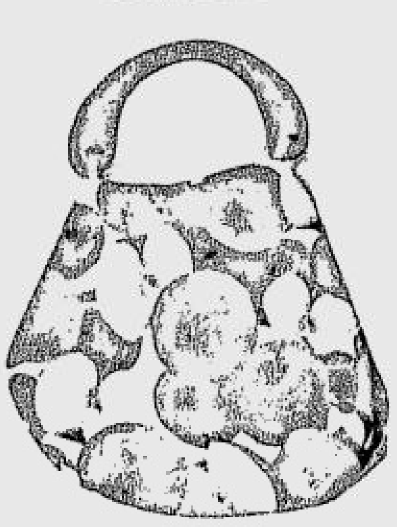
LAST week, the 2bU! Fashion Freaks stormed the malls, a supermarket, a spa and friends' houses in search of goods that would awaken the shopping monster in you.

We discovered funky flipflops so inexpensive even your first-grader sister could afford them with her small allowance. We found excellent shirts for just a little over—and even under—a hundred pesos, mesh gloves to make you feel like Madonna circa 1980, and the colorful update to our favorite Happy Feet sandals that had us jumping for joy. And that's not even half of it.

Our feet are aching. We've got papercuts from the price tags and our own shopping monsters are begging to be unleashed, but hey, that's why we're called Fashion Freaks.

Take a look at the contents of our giant shopping cart:

CARRY your essentials around with this tote bag. Human, P198



EVEN Snow White would have loved this bag. And it's reversible too. The other side is plain red for a more subdued look. P535. Available at Shopwise on Pasong Tamo, Makati

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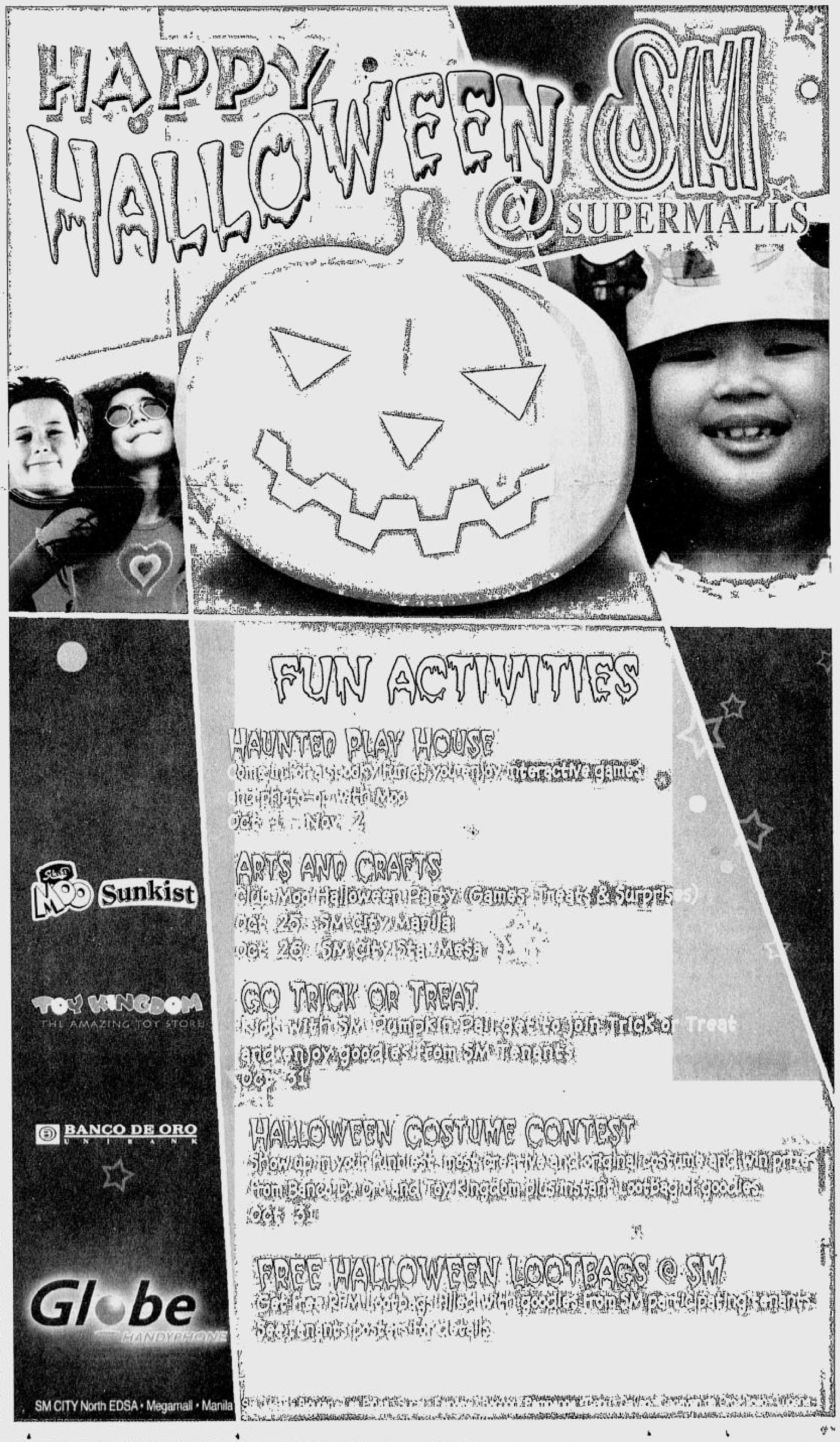

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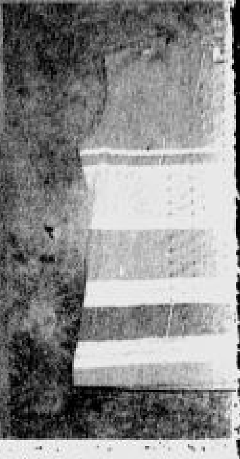
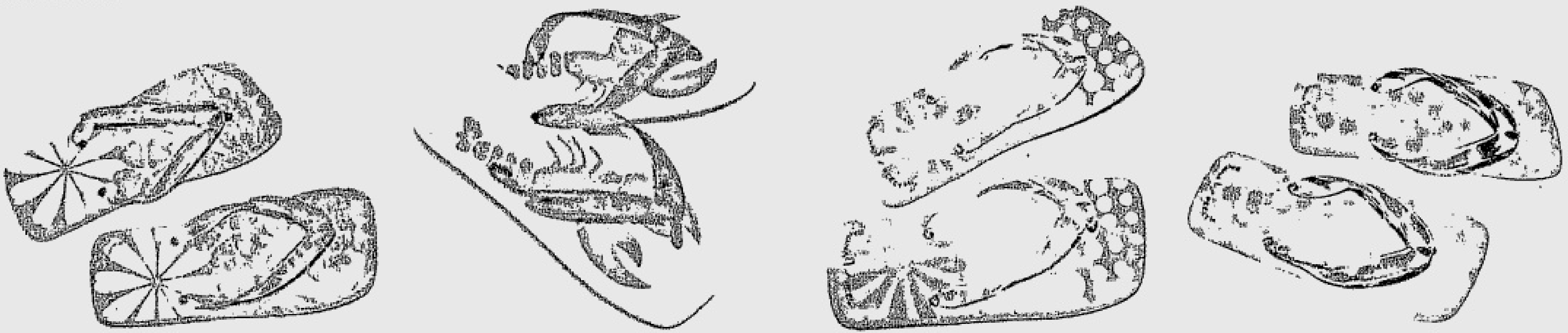
LIBERTY on a shirt. Soul Edge, P645. At U, Rustan's Makati

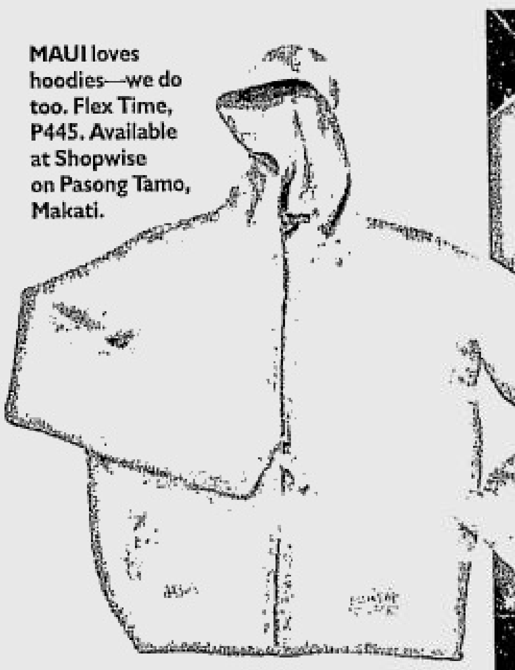
WHY the number 76? We don't know. But it's a cute shirt. Jag, P349.75

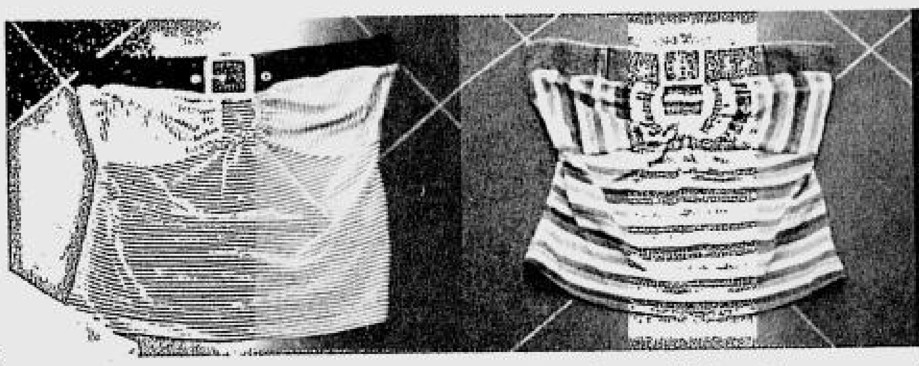
THIS striped polo screams geek chic. U, P875. At U, Rustan's Makati

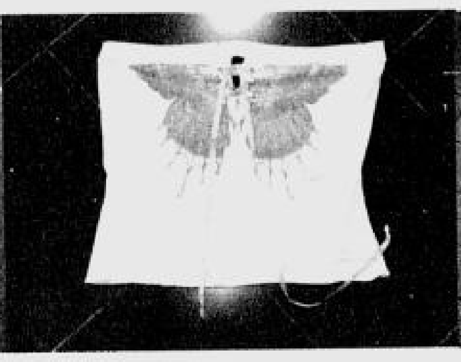
GO oriental with this simple white shirt. Jag, P379.75


STRIPES are always [illegible]


THEY'RE fun, they're cute, they're colorful. But the best thing about these Banana Peel flipflops is they're so inexpensive you can buy them in all colors and designs to match this week's pedicure. Banana Peel, P65, P95,145


MAUI loves hoodies—we do too. Flex Time, P445. Available at Shopwise on Pasong Tamo, Makati.


BARE those creamy shoulders and toned arms with these tubes. Hot Kiss, P1,550 each. At U, Rustan's Makati


YOU don't have to be Mariah to flaunt your butterflies. Hot Kiss, P1,250. At U, Rustan's Makati

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MAKE Kylie proud with these denim short shorts. YVIP, P695. At U, Rustan's Makati

SHOW off your gams with this embroidered mini. XOXO, P2250. At U, Rustan's Makati

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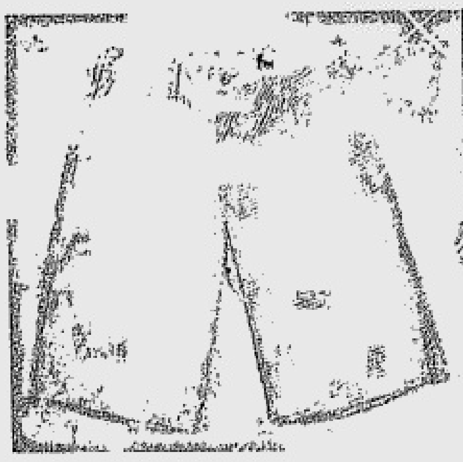
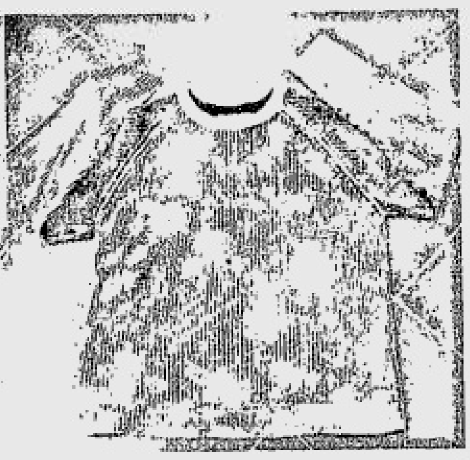
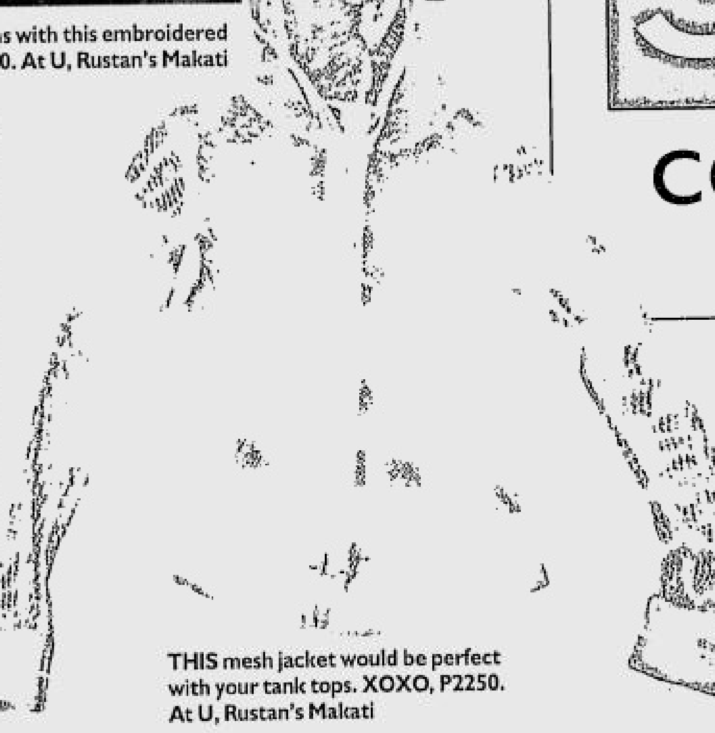
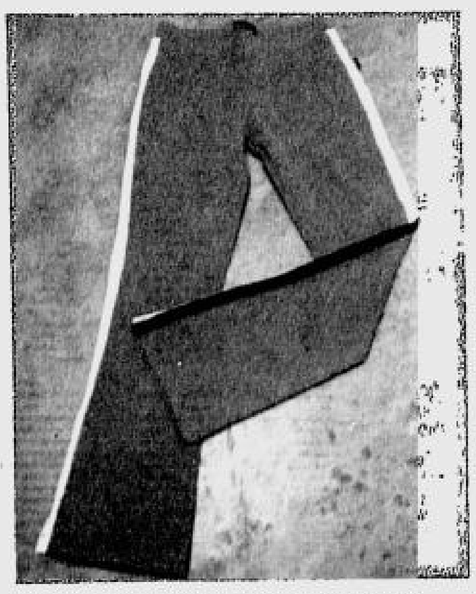
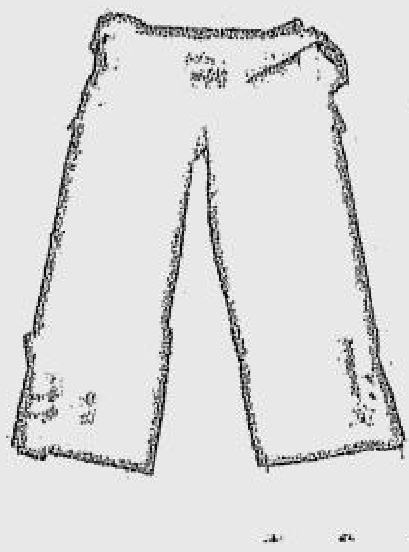

WHO says only girls can flash their legs? Men's pinstriped shorts from Fresh Jive, P2,250. Available at U, Rustan's Makati

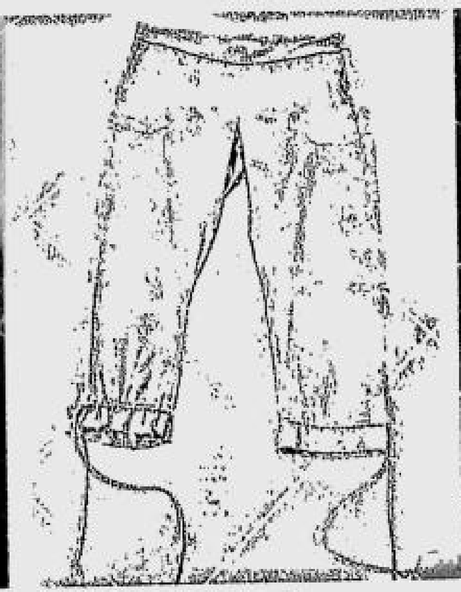

KEEP yourself warm with this comfy acrylic sweater. We can almost imagine David Schwimmer wearing this on "Friends." BC Ethic, P2750. At U, Rustan's Makati


THIS mesh jacket would be perfect with your tank tops. XOXO, P2250. At U, Rustan's Makati


GIVE the old black-and-white a rest. These blue trackpants are easy on the eyes. Flex Time, P345. Available at Shopwise on Pasong Tamo, Makati


BE on fire with these bright red cargo pants. Topshop, P2,195

IF you're tired of your basic jeans, this embroidered pair will give you a boost. XOXO, 2350. At U, Rustan's Makati


YOUR skin will be thankful. These olive green capris are very satiny to the touch. Hot Kiss, P1750. At U, Rustan's Makati

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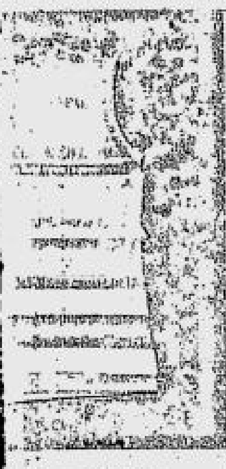
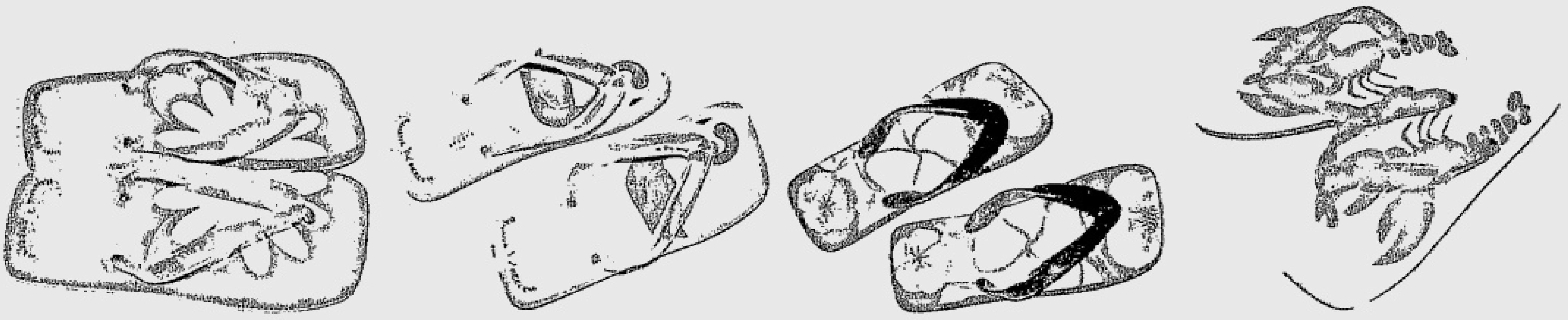


[illegible] Time, P79.50 [illegible] Pasong Tamo.

THIS shirt reminds us of "Down With Love." etc., P135. Available at Shopwise on Pasong Tamo, Makati.

SHIRTS with loud designs rock, etc., P145 each. Available at Shopwise on Pasong Tamo, Makati.

SPARKLE with this sequined shirt. Teen Zone, P99. Available at Shopwise on Pasong Tamo, Makati



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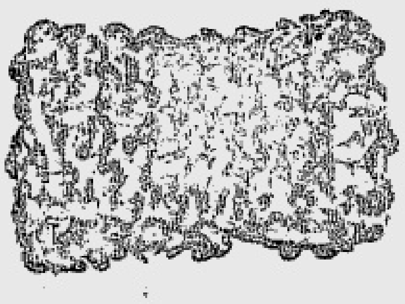
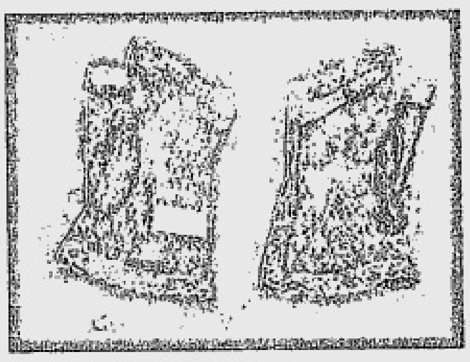


FEEL like Wonder Woman with this pink sequined wristband. Topshop, P295



ELLE Woods plus Madonna equals these hot pink gloves. Topshop, P295

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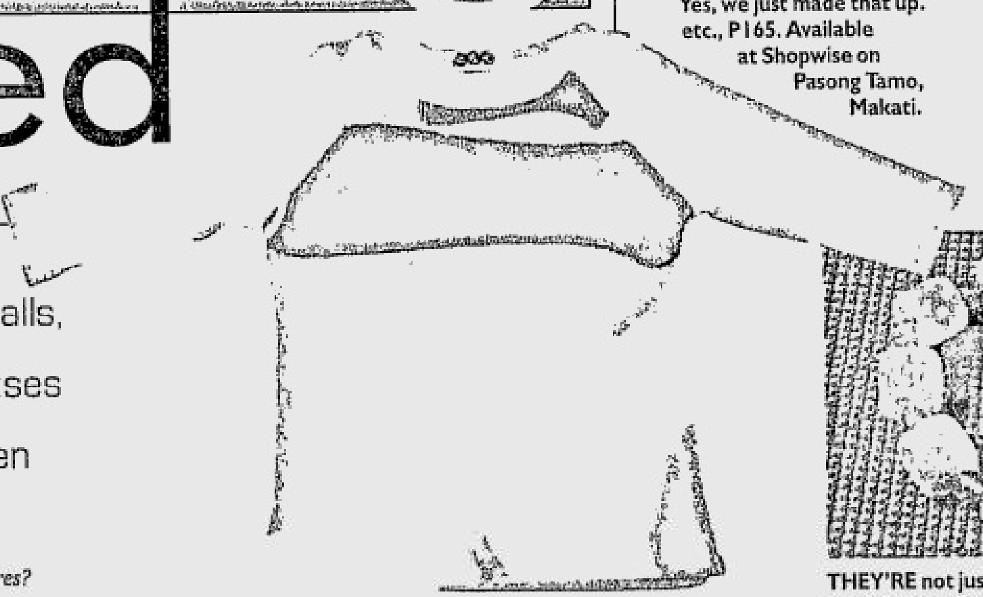
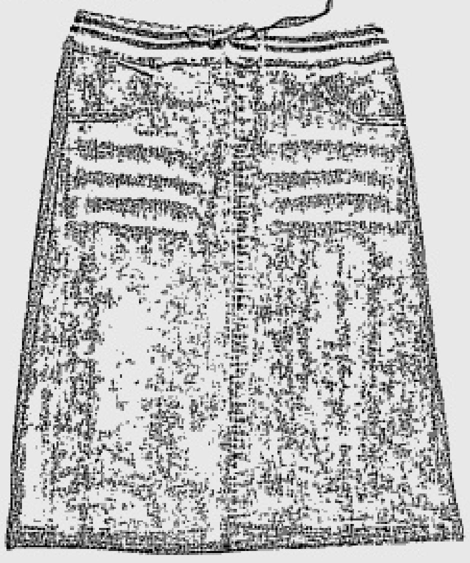
spa and friends' houses
ods that would awaken
ing monster in you

reaks to visit your shop or see your wares?
hefashionfreaks@yahoo.com

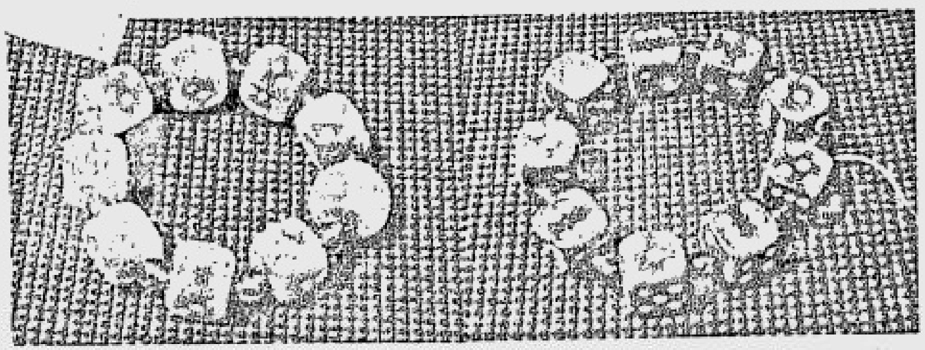


APPARENTLY, the guy on this shirt was famous for discovering an island of gold in the Carribean. Yes, we just made that up. etc., P165. Available at Shopwise on Pasong Tamo, Makati.

THE JEANS jacket is like a good friend. If your wardrobe is in dire need of one, this zip-up soft-denim jacket is a surprisingly affordable option. Jag, P749.75. Available at Jag outlets



THE GRAY and red accent provides a new twist to the good old jeans skirt. etc, P365. Available at Shopwise on Pasong Tamo, Makati

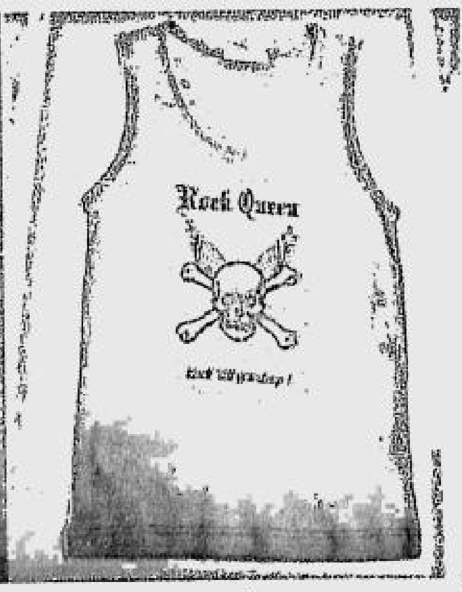


THEY'RE not just for throwing. These dice bracelets are playful and fun. Sari-Sari Store, P349. Available at Sari-Sari Store outlets in Glorietta, Rockwell Powerplant and SM malls

s are sheer magic. The
to adjust the pants to
. XOXO, P2250. At U,

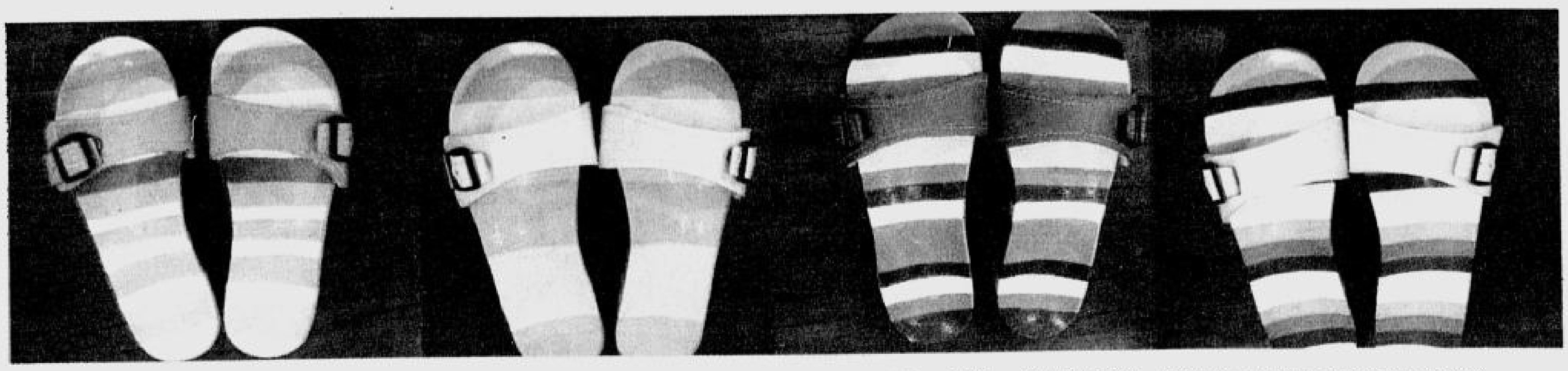
WOULD you wear this if it said "Philippines"? Grab, P1,495. At U, Rustan's Makati

EVEN punks like pink. Topshop, P1,245

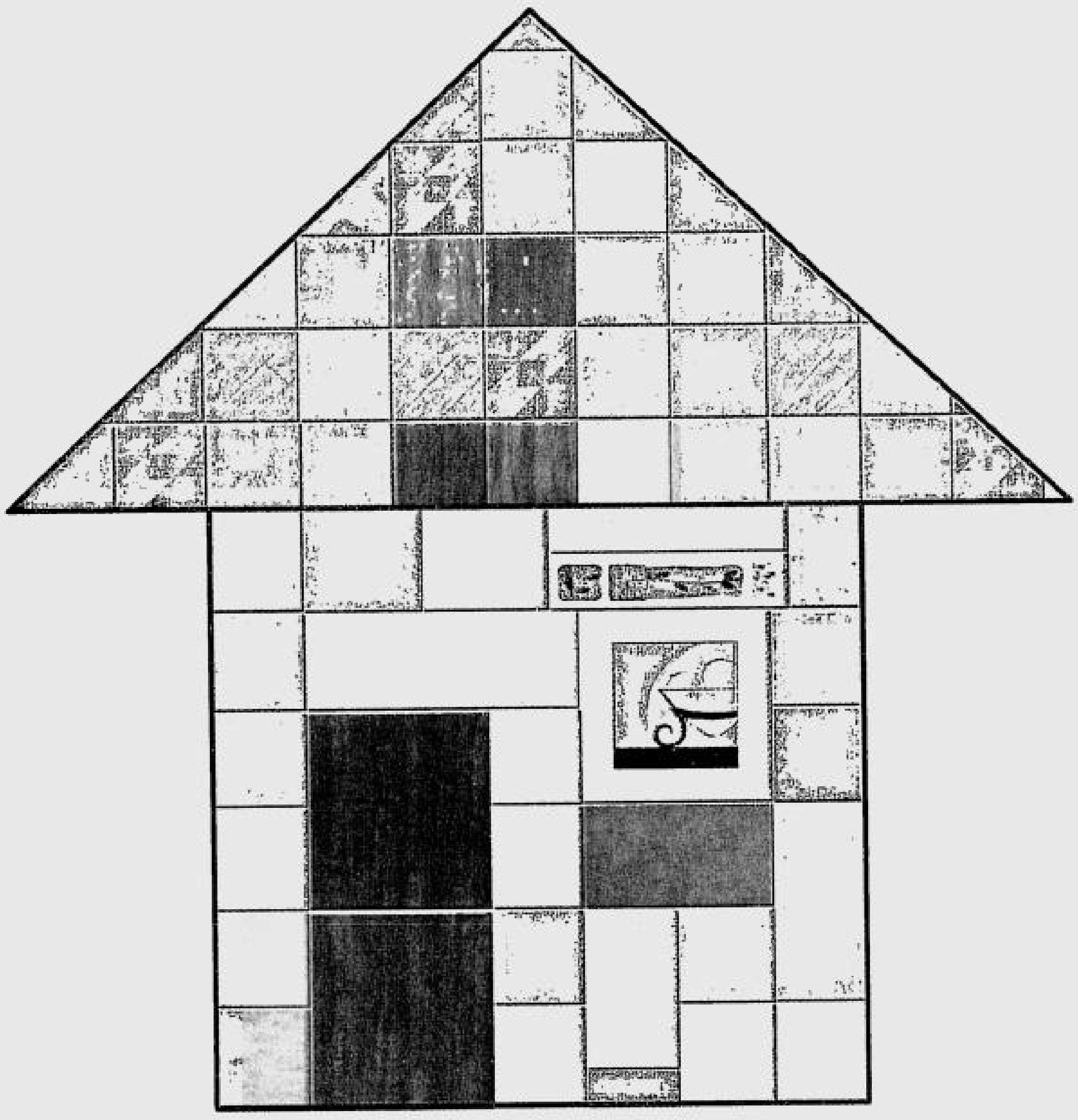


WEAR this to your next hot concert. Topshop, P745

WEAR this dress on its own or with pants. Teen Zone, P175. Available at Shopwise on Pasong Tamo, Makati



IF the wooden soles don't do it for you, the Regina Painted sandals might be a better choice. Happy Feet, P1300, available at Nail Spa (Unit 106 I Midland Bldg. Gamboa St. Legaspi Village, Makati). Call 8173128 or 8300702.



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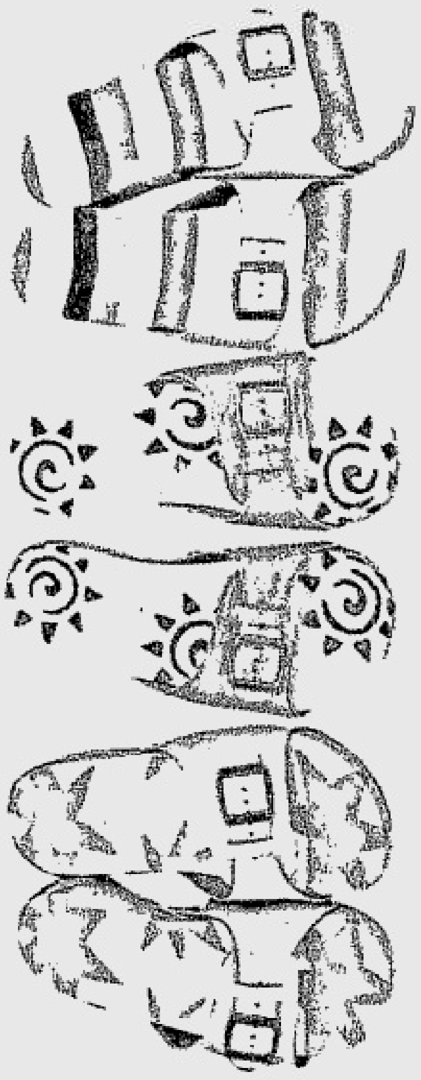
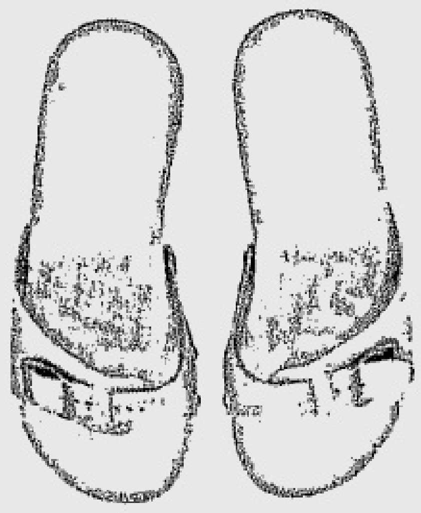
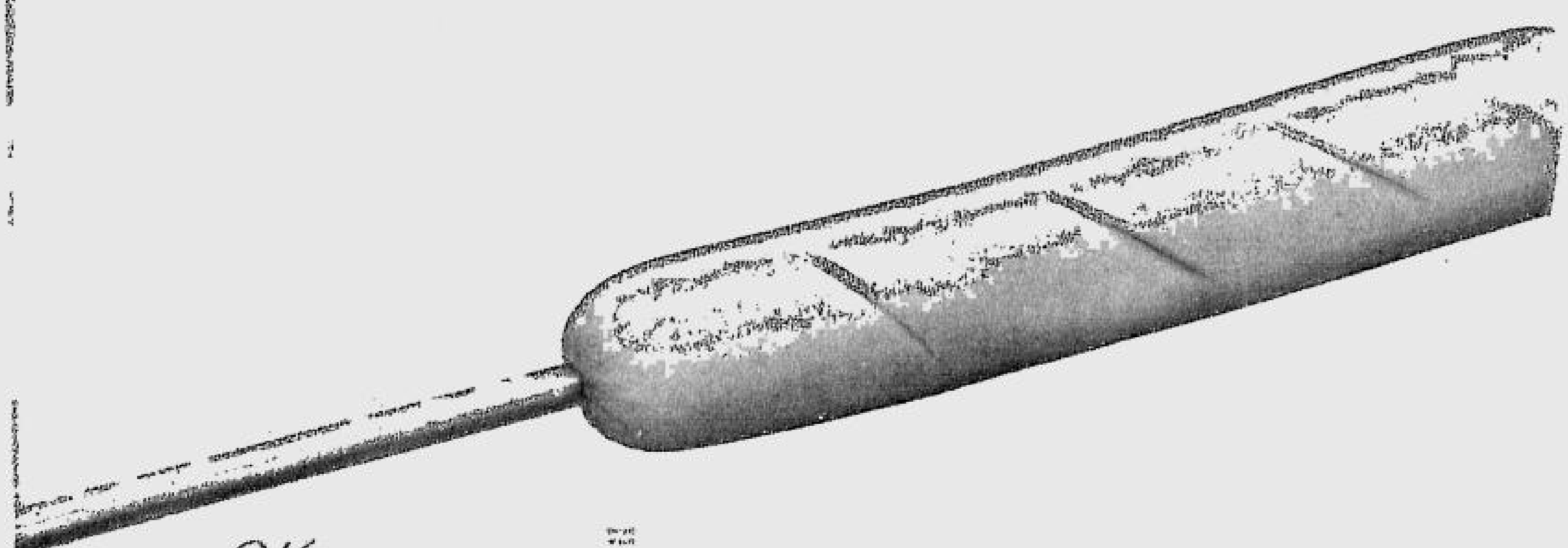


We thought the classics were already pretty hot. But they've come out with something better. Color is always good.



THE MARIZZA sandals come in various colors—white, fuschia, orange, green, red, baby pink and dark blue. Happy Feet, P950. Available at Nail Spa (Unit 106 I Midland Bldg. Gamboa St. Legaspi Village, Makati). Call 8173128 or 8300702.



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